Revolution versus Counter-Revolution : the People's Party and the Royalist(s) in visual dialogue

Revolution versus Counter-Revolution: The People's Party and the Royalist(s) in Visual Dialogue

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Declaration

I hereby declare that, all the material presented for examination is my own work and has not been written for me, in whole or in part, by any other person.

Thanavi Chotpradit
October 2015

Abstract

The People's Party (Khana ratsadon) or the monarchy: which one is the true begetter of Thai democracy? The people or the King: who possesses sovereign power in Thailand? The thesis *Revolution versus Counter-Revolution: The People's Party and the Royalist(s) in Visual Dialogue* explores these core questions of Thai politics through an examination of the dynamism of the People's Party's visual culture. Under a royalist hegemony, started in 1947, the People's Party's arts and cultural artefacts have been recast as foreign and tasteless. This thesis argues that this royalist accusation highlights the profound significance of the revolutionary visual culture. In fact the People's Party's memorials, monuments, architecture and artwork are deeply embedded within a struggle for political legitimisation. They are "sites of memory", or *lieux de mémoire,* that take on a performative role in the rivalry between the two ideologies: constitutionalism/democracy and royalism. Between 1932 and 2010 through a series of political incidents they have undergone a series of transformations both in the way they are interpreted and the cultural memory associated with them. This thesis intends to unravel the complexity and web of associations between these cultural icons, political ideologies, class struggle and memory politics.

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The beginning of this long journey may be traced back to the summer of 2008 when I browsed through a slew of websites and encountered the political web-board *Fa Diew Kan* (Samesky). Amidst the post-2006 coup political scene, the fierce debates about the monarchy, a taboo topic of Thailand, not only changed me forever but also inspired me to engage in art historical research with politics. In Thailand, where the space for academic freedom had shrunk precipitously since the 19th September 2006 coup, I desired to chip away at the seemingly fixed boundaries.

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Note on Transliteration and Referencing

There is no generally agreed system of representing Thai in roman script, and all systems have some limitations because the 26 letters of the roman alphabet are not sufficient to represent all the consonants, vowels, dipthongs, and tones of Thai. This thesis adheres to the phonetic transcription for most Thai words, but without tonal marks. I follow the "General System of Phonetic Transcription of Thai Characters into Roman" devised by the Royal Institute, Bangkok, in 1999. I differ slightly from the Royal Institute system in using "j" for the Thai "jor jan", not "ch", excepted in accepted spellings of royal titles, royal names and those names, which have been transcribed by other systems. In the case of a name which is widely known or which can be checked, the owner's transcription has been adhered to. Otherwise, the spelling follows the system of romanisation above. I refer to Prince Damrong, Prince Naris, Phahon, and so on rather than their full titles and names, however, their ranks such as Phraya or the longer royal names are given in the first reference to each. Lastly, I refer to Thai people by their surnames as in Western convention.

List of Abbreviations

BACC − Bangkok Art and Culture Centre

CDR − Council for Democratic Reform

CNS − Council of National Security

CRES − Centre for Resolution of Emergency Situation

DADD − Democratic Alliance against Dictatorship

NARC − National Administrative Reform Council

NAT − The National Archives of Thailand

NCPO - National Council for Peace and Order

NGO-COD − NGO Coordinating Committee on Development

NPP − New Politics Party

NUDD − National United Front of Democracy Against Dictatorship

PAD − People's Alliance for Democracy

PIC − The People's Information Center

PPP − Palang Prachachon Party

PT − Pheu Thai Party

PWAD − People's Writer and Artist Democracy network

SERC − State-Enterprises Workers' Relation Confederation

SFT − The Student Federation of Thailand

TRCT − Truth for Reconciliation and Conciliation in Thailand

TRT − Thai Rak Thai Party

UDD − United Front of Democracy Against Dictatorship

Introduction

"Foreign" and "tasteless" are typical descriptions, manifest or latent, which one finds when encountering any text written on the art and architecture of the People's Party (Khana ratsadon). The People's Party was a group led by European trained military officers and civilians who changed the political system of Thailand (formerly known as Siam) from an absolute to a constitutional monarchy in 1932. The regime was eventually toppled by the coup d'état of 1947. This criticism originated from a lecture by Mom Rajawongse Kukrit Pramoj[1] in the seminar "Art since 1932" at Thammasat University in 1983.[2] Pramoj denounced the People's Party's art as alien to the basis of Thai society and even tasteless: 'Thai art after 1932, frankly and patriotically speaking, is the most declining age of art, that is, there is no Thai art at all' because 'they [the People's Party leading members] came back from France and their taste of art is just from cafés along the streets of Paris', hence, 'the images they see as beautiful are pornography' (Pramoj, 1985: 2, 14).

As a "True Blue",[3] Pramoj, one of the most influential royalist intellectuals and politicians, actively promoted royalism in both the political and cultural spheres. His criticism is part of a long-time strategy of defaming the People's Party and its cultural legacy instigated with the fall of the revolutionary regime in 1947. His approach has been fundamental to the understanding and attitude towards the People's Party (Prakitnonthakan, 2005) because it highlights royalist nationalism as the basis of both Thai aesthetics and writing on art history. Whereas the People's Party's Revolution of 1932 has been recast as

[1] Mom Rajawongse Kukrit Pramoj was the thirteenth prime minister, a co-founder of the Progressive Party in 1945 (integrated with the Democrat Party in 1950), founder of the Social Action Party in 1974, writer and journalist, founder of the daily newspaper *Siamrath*, National Artist of literature in 1985 and World Historic Important Figure of UNESCO in 2009.

[2] The seminar "Thai Art after 1932" was part of a monthly seminar series organised by the Thai Khadi Research Institute of Thammasat University to commemorate the bicentenary anniversary of Bangkok as the capital city of Thailand. The Rattanakosin Bicentenary in 1982 was organised under the chair of the prime minister General Prem Tinsulanond (now the President of the King's Privy Council) to underline the position of the Chakri Monarch at the core of national unity. For Pramoj's speech, see Pramoj, Kukrit (1985) 'Pathakatha nam sinlapakam samai mai' [Speech on modern art] in Thai Khadi Research Institute (ed.) *Banthuek kan sammana sinlapakam lung Pho. So. 2475* [Records of the seminar on art since 1932], Bangkok: Thai Khadi Research Institute. See also, Krairiksh, Piriya *et al*. (eds.) (1983) *Sinlapakam lung Pho. So. 2475* [Art since 1932], Bangkok: Thai Khadi Research Institute.

[3] "True Blue" was an underground weekly newspaper of the political prisoners from various royalist coup attempts in Bangkwang Central Prison during the revolutionary regime. It became a referential name for royalist intellectuals and politicians who aimed at rehabilitating the monarchy's status and devaluating the People's Party post-1947. For an elaborate discussion of True Blue, see Chapter 4 'Fan jing khong nak udomkhati "nam ngoen thae": Rue 2475 sang rabop klai phan' [Dream of the true blue utopianists: The construction of 1932 and reconstruction of the hybrid regime] in Chaiching, Nattapoll (2013) *Kho fanfai nai fan an luea chuea: khwam khluean wai khong khabuankan patipak patiwat siam por por 2475-2500* [To Dream the Impossible Dream: The Counter-Revolution Movement in Siam 1932-1947], Bangkok: Fa Diew Kan, p. 135-196.

"early ripe, early rotten", the hasty change that the nation had not been ready for,[4] the revolutionary visual culture was perceived as "foreign" and "tasteless".

According to the Thai historian Thongchai Winichakul (2001), royalist nationalism is a hegemonic discourse that has dominated the entire production of knowledge in Thai history.[5] It absorbs all stories and events into a master narrative plot that centres on the monarchy. Hence, any facts that are incoherent to the master narrative of Thai history are unorthodox memories and therefore unwanted pasts. The case of the People's Party's art as the mottled art movement, forced to be negative and rejected, suggests the repression of certain historical events because they are heterogeneous to the main hegemonic narrative (Jameson, 1991; Forty and Küchler, 1999). Being a dark spot in Thai art history, the work of the People's Party became what Jacques Rancière[6] termed the "wrong", an uncounted in a space where it is countable as uncounted (Rancière, 1999: 38-39) of the Thai royalist art historical narrative. Rancière's concept of a "wrong" of a miscount, or *les sans-part* describes a position within a political structure; there is a fundamental wrong within the social hierarchy of political order that refuses to recognise the existence of some groups. For Rancière, a struggle for recognition of the political existence of the disadvantage parties is a process of political subjectivication: to redress the wrong of the miscount. This thesis applies Rancière's concept of "wrong" to the neglecting of the art of the People's Party in Thai art history. The politics of academic othering and relegation is, as Pierre Bourdieu notes, a site of struggle, a game where power involves in defining a legitimate practice, accepting something and refusing another, constituting it as a rightful publication (Bourdieu 2005: 12-13).[7]

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[4] The discourse termed "early ripped, early rotten" that conceptualised the 1932 Revolution was conceived by the royalist intellectual Chai-Anan Samudavanija in 1973. See Samudavanija, Chai-Anan *et al*. (1973) *Sat kan mueang* [Political animal], Bangkok: Thai Watana Panich.

[5] For the full elaboration on the relationship between royal nationalism and the craft of Thai historiography, see Winichakul, Thongchai (2001) 'Prawatsat thai baep racha chat niyom jak yuk ana nikhom am phrang su racha chat niyom mai rue latthi sadet pho khong kradumphi thai nai patjuban' [Royal-nationalist history: From the era of crypto-colonialism to neo-royalist nationalism, or the contemporary cult of fathers of the Thai bourgeois]' *Silapawattanatum*, Year 23, Vol. 1 (November), pp. 56-65. For the concept of history as fiction and plot of history, see White, Hayden (1978) *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press. See also Jameson, Fredric (1991) *Postmodernism, or, The cultural logic of late capitalism*, New York: Verso.

[6] For examples of responses to Rancière's accounts on the "wrong" and political subjectivication, see May, Todd (2008) *The Political Thoughts of Jacques Rancière: Creating Equality*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press; Žižek, Slavoj (1999) *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology*, London: Verso and Lazzarato, Maurizio (2014) *Sign and Machines: Capitalism and the Production of Subjectivity*, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e).

[7] Pierre Bourdieu's concept of field explains the social space as an arena of struggle operated by social actors on a hierarchical basis. In 'The Intellectual Field: A World Apart', Bourdieu indicates that the dynamic of the intellectual field is a competition between the power in publishing and the power in refusing publication. See

It should also be noted that the absence of any study of revolutionary art is the result of the insufficiency of theoretical and contextual underpinnings in the practice of art history in Thailand. Artists who sometimes play the role of art critics mostly write on modern and contemporary art history and art criticism.[8] As such, these writings are schematic or written from the perspective of art appreciation. In addition to art criticism, a biography of Silpa Bhirasri (formerly, Corrado Feroci),[9] another form of writing, which has been excessively produced and served as source of information about the Thai modern artistic practice and art education, significantly omitted his works in Italy and during the period of the revolutionary regime.[10] Honoured by the state as the "Father of Thai modern art" and founder of the art education system, the exclusion of Bhirasri's designs of war memorials for Mussolini[11] and his work under the People's Party implies that these seemingly distasteful pieces may result in a contamination of his idealistic image and interrupt the smooth sequential flow of past events in the royal-national art history (Chotpradit, 2012).

After decades of devaluation, a revision of the importance of the art of the People's Party emerged in 2005. The architectural historian Chatri Prakitnonthakan was the first to counter Pramoj's criticism of revolutionary art as a mere Western imitation. He also returned it to academic debates.[12] By engaging with social analysis, Prakitnonthakan offers a different

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Bourdieu, Pierre (2005) 'The Intellectual Field. A World Apart' in Kocur, Zoya and Leung, Simon (eds.) *Theory in Contemporary Art Since 1985*, Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell, p. 11-18. Further discussion on Bourdieu's field, see for example, Lahire, B. (ed.) (1999) *Le Travail Sociologique de Pierre Bourdieu – Dettes et Critiques*, Paris: La Decouverte/Poche; Martin, J. (2003) 'What is field theory?' *American Journal of Sociology*, 109(1), pp. 1-49 and Sapiro, G. (2003) 'Forms of politicization in the French literary field' *Theory and Society*, 32, pp. 633-52.

[8] The Department of Art History at the Faculty of Archaeology of Silpakorn University is the only art history institution in the country although most art historians work in the field of ancient art.

[9] Silpa Bhirasri was an Italian sculptor hired by King Vajiravudh to serve the royal court in 1923 and who continued to work in Thailand throughout the revolutionary regime.

[10] See for example Tangchareon, Viroon (1989) *Sinlapathat: Ruam bot wijan lae thatsana tang sinlapa* [Perspective on art: A collection of art critics and other writingw], Bangkok: Ton O; N. Na Paknam (pseudonym) (1992) 'Thi ma khong kan kamnoet maha witthayalai silpakorn' [The birth of Silpakorn University] *Muang Boran,* Year 18, Vol. 1 (January–March), pp. 88-97 and Silpakorn University (1993) *"Rakngao" mahawitthayalai sinlapakon. Nithatsakan phon ngan khong "sit" rongrian pranit sinlapakam-rongrian silpakorn phanaek chang* ["Roots" of Silpakorn University. Exhibition of "students" from Silpakorn Art Academy] (Catalogue), Bangkok: Amarin Printing and Publishing.

[11] There are only two writings that mention Bhirasri's connection to Italian fascism. See Poshyananda, Apinan (1992) *Modern Art in Thailand. Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Singapore: Oxford University Press and Wright, Michael (1992) 'Anusaowari prachathippatai "anusaowari kohok" thi thuk dat plaeng hai phut khwam jing' [The Democracy Monument: The deceitful monument that tells the truth] *Silapawatthanatum*, Year 14, Vol. 2 (December), pp. 178-181.

[12] See Prakitnonthakan, Chatri (2005) *Khana ratsadon chalong ratthathammanun: Prawatsat kan mueang lung 2475 phan sathapattayakam amnat* [Khana ratsadon celebrating the constitution: History and power of Thai politics after 1932 in architecture], Bangkok: Matichon. Apart from Prakitnonthakan's work, other historians have analysed the monuments erected in the revolutionary regime. These studies contribute largely to the study of the revolutionary monuments by offering a deep analysis of the relationship between art, politics and society. See Eosiwong, Nidhi (1990) 'Songkhram anusaowari kap rat thai' [Wars on monuments and the Thai state]

perspective towards the People's Party's cultural inheritance as a product of the internal politics: an embodiment of the new ideology of constitutionalism.[13] Yet Prakitnonthakan does not explain it in terms of hybridity and localisation. This thesis considers the People's Party's art as a product of cross-cultural adoption: a localised and hybridised culture (Clark 1993; Bhabha, 1994; García Canclini, 1995; Coombes and Avtar, 2000)[14] in order to examine its role and function within Thai society.

In addition, Prakitnonthakan's explanation of revolutionary art is essential to the revivification of the memory of the revolution through the use of its legacies by the Red Shirt movement in 2009-10. However, the Red Shirts' appropriation of the People's Party's cultural heritages in relation to the subsuming of the revolutionary memory to the movement's struggle has yet to be fully discussed. As a consequence of the 2006 royal-supported military coup that toppled the elected Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, the debate over the origin of democracy and the possession of sovereign power has resurfaced as a war between royalist and electoral democracies (Winichakul, 2014). As such, the rivalry between these two ideologies has initiated the re-interpretation of the past as a process that associates it with the present (Schwartz, 1982; Halbwachs, 1992; Radstone 2000) with the Red Shirts' use of the revolutionary cultural inheritance: the People's Party's Plaque (Mut Khana ratsadon), the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument (Anusaowari Phithak Ratthathammanun) and the Democracy Monument (Anusaowari Prachathippatai) specifies the place of the past in contemporary Thai society (Samuel, 2012).

Silpawattanatum, Year 11, Vol. 3 (January), pp. 266-284; Kaeongamprasoet, Saiphin (1995) *Kan mueang nai anusaowari thao suranari* [The politics in the Thao Suranari Monument], Bangkok: Matichon and Khumsupha, Malini (2005) *Anusawari prachathippatai kap khwam mai thi mong mai hen* [The Democracy Monument and its invisible meanings], Bangkok: Vibhasa.

[13] Chatri Prakitnonthakan also coined the term "Silapa Khana ratsadon" (The Art of the People's Party) for the art and architecture of this period. See Prakitnonthakan, Chatri (2005) *Ibid.* and Prakitnonthakan, Chatri (2009) *Silapa-sathapattayakam Khana ratsadon sanyalak tang kan mueang nai choeng udom kan* [The People's Party's art and architecture: Symbols of political ideology], Bangkok: Matichon.

[14] Postcolonialism offered a new theoretical configuration on the non-Western cultural product as hybridity. It challenged the notion of essentialism that perceived the non-Western modernity as an imitation of Western culture yet inauthentic and sometimes contaminated. The notion of hybridity has re-defined cultural transfer as a process of appropriation: a selective procedure of the indigenous, which created forms of modernity different from its origin. See Bhabha, Homi K. (1994) *The Location of Culture*, London: Routledge; García Canclini, Néstor (1995) *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity*, Minneapolis, Minn.; London: University of Minnesota Press and Coombes, Annie E. and Brah, Avtar (eds.) (2000) *Hybridity and Its Discontents: Politics, Science, Culture*, London: Routledge. The Australian art historian John Clark further argued that the difference from the original forms and discourses in non-Western modern art indicated the openness of discourses itself: the capability of being varyingly interpreted through the local transformation. See Clark, John (1993) 'Open and Closed Discourses of Modernity in Asian Art' in Clark, John (ed.) *Modernity in Asian Art*, University of Sydney East Asian Studies No. 7, Sydney: Wild Peony, p. 1-17.

Central to the argument of this thesis is the theory of performativity[15] (Austin, 1976; Derrida, 1988; Butler, 1993; 1997) as a critical mode of thinking about art and culture (Jones and Stephenson, 1999). As a conjunction of signifying and enacting, the theory of performativity applied in this thesis will open up a new way of understanding the process of meaning of production in the Thai visual culture in relation to Thai politics. This thesis considers the People's Party's artefacts as a site of ideological interpellation, contestation and political resistance where the debate on the origins of Thai democracy and possession of sovereign power has yet to be settled. It aims to investigate the dynamism of visual culture in the rivalry between the People's Party and the royalists (1932-2010). The thesis will demonstrate the performative notions of the People's Party's art in the quest for being the true begetter of Thai democracy and the legitimising of sovereign power. Through a discussion of the visual representation and performative acts, the thesis is located within the battlefield of political rivalry where different ideologies fight against each other in an effort to establish themselves in the public consciousness.

This thesis considers the urban space of the city of Bangkok as a scene of revolution and counter-revolution. As a locus and target of political organisation (Lefebvre, 2003),[16] the old and the new royal areas, Rattanakosin Island and Dusit Palace, are connected by Ratchadamnoen Avenue, or the "Royal Promenade", are essential to every critical phase of Thai political changes. The transformation of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall to the People's Party's National Assembly in 1932; the use of the royal funeral ground, Sanam Luang, for the cremation of the fallen commoners who died fighting the royalist coup

[15] The theory of performativity derives from J. L. Austin's concept of performative utterance: all utterances must be seen as actions. See Austin, J. L. (1976) *How to Do Things with Words*, London: Oxford University Press. Speech act theory has been advanced in a variety of fields such as anthropology, ritual and performance studies, psychoanalysis, gender studies, cultural studies and art history. Jacques Derrida and Judith Butler are among the prominent scholars who developed further the notion of performativity in the reinforcement of identities in the society. See Derrida, Jacques (1988) *Limited Inc*, Evanston: Northwestern University Press and Butler, Judith (1993) *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"*, New York; London: Routledge and Butler, Judith (1997) *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*, New York; London: Routledge. Performativity becomes a new perspective on art history as it offers a way to engage with works of art and the production of meaning as *performative*: the construction of an art historical narrative as a process of open-ended interpretation. See for example, Jones, Amelia and Stephenson, Andrew (eds.) (1999) *Performing the Body/Performing the Text*, London and New York: Routledge and Hantelmann, Dorothea von (2010) *How to Do Things with Art: The Meaning of Art's Performativity*, Zurich: JRP Ringier.

[16] Henri Lefebvre explained urbanisation as a social construction based on a dialectical relationship between space, capitalism and everyday life. His thoughts on the production of social space have influenced greatly a study of space, urbanisation, geography, architecture, planning and cultural studies. See, Lefebvre, Henri (1991) *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith, Oxford: Basil-Blackwell and Lefebvre, Henri (2003) *The Urban Revolution*, trans. Robert Bononno; Forward by Neil Smith, Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press. For a discussion of Lefebvrian approach to contemporary urban issues, see Goonewardena, Kanishka *et al*. (2008) *Space, Difference, Everyday Life: Reading Henri Lefebvre*, New York and London: Routledge.

attempt in 1933; the erection of Democracy Monument on Ratchadamnoen Avenue in 1939; the unveiling of the King Prajadhipok Royal Statue at the new National Assembly in 1980 and the demonstration of the Red Shirts at the People's Party's cultural heritages in 2009-2010 implicate contradictions and instabilities in the social relations based on class struggle.

Hence, this thesis shows a geography of class struggle (Harvey, 1989)[17] through an examination of the competition between the royalists and the People's Party, and later the Red Shirt movement, on the Bangkok urban space. Yet, the city's landscape not only serves as a backdrop of on-going political rivalry, or a signifier of power relations, but also performs as a performative agent (Mitchell, 1994), a mechanism of the alternation process of the two political hegemonies, namely royalism and democracy. The notions of liminality and ritual ceremony (Gennep, 1960; Turner, 1974 and 1991; Sallnow, 1981; Hastrup, 1998) also offer a theoretical framework for analysing these performative acts as ritual spatial performances in the press-media (Hughes-Freeland, 1998).[18]

Consequently, this thesis focuses on various "sites of memory" or *lieux de mémoire* (Nora, 1989),[19] memorials, monuments, statutes, sculptures, architecture and political activity as modes of political discourses that reify and reaffirm political vision (Bermingham, 1994). It argues that these sites are the distinctive milieus for political competition from which each group constitutes, interpellates and derives their power, values, expectations and states of consciousness. These sites, as *lieux de mémoire*, are profound in the shaping of both

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[17] David Harvey, profoundly inspired by Lefebvre, developed a theory of urbanisation of capitalism and modern geography. In *The Urban Experience*, Harvey explained how labour power and class relations engaged with differentiation of residential space. See Harvey, David (1989) *The Urban Experience*, Baltimore, MD; London: Johns Hopkins University Press. This thesis employs Harvey's concept of residential differentiation as mode of political discourse to discuss the urban expansion and the flow of the capital Bangkok. Positive responses and critiques of Harvey can be found in Castree, N. and Gregory, D. (eds.) (2006) *David Harvey: A Critical Reade*r, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

[18] The concept of liminality was first introduced by Arnold van Gennep in the early 20th century and gained popularity through the works of Victor Turner. Liminality, according to Turner, is a "moment in and out of time": a threshold stage of a process. See Turner, Victor (1969) *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, Ithaka: Cornell University Press and Turner, Victor (1974) *Drama, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*, New York: Ithaka. The concept of liminality has been widely used in a study of rituals, political and cultural transformations as well as in arts. For a discussion of liminality in relation to ritual performance and media, see Hughes-Freeland, Felicia (ed.) (1998) *Ritual, Performance, Media*, London and New York: Routledge.

[19] Pierre Nora's volumes *Les lieux de mémoire* (1984-1992, translated into English as *Realms of Memory 1, 2, 3* and *Rethinking France*) are influential to the study of European cultural history. Yet, many criticisms arose as responses to this monumental project and his conceptualisation of memory. The works of Jan Aussmann and Alain Schnapp also challenges Nora's exclusion of pre-historical site and ancient monument as site of memory. See Aussmann, Jan (1992) *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, München: Beck and Schnapp, Alain (1993) *The Discovery of the Past. The Origins of Archaeology*, London: British Museum Press. For a review of Nora's *Les lieux de mémoire* and his criticisms, see Rothberg, Michael (2010) 'Introduction: Between Memory and Memory: From Lieux de mémoire to Noeuds de mémoire' *Yale French Studies*, No. 118/119, Noeuds de mémoire: Multidirectional Memory in Postwar French and Francophone Culture, pp. 3-12.

constitutionalist and monarchical Thailand. As such, the concepts of collective memory (Halbwachs, 1992) and cultural memory (Assmann, 1995)[20] are fundamental to the study of the creation of Thai cultural memory in this thesis. Whereas the People's Party's cultural elements are a representation of collective-cultural memory, they are also performative agents in the process of constructing, erasing or subsuming memory (Antze and Lambek, 1996; Sturken, 1997; Koureas, 2007). In the complexity of memorialisation, memory is both an object and a tool of power (Nora, 1996).

The body and body politics[21] has a subtle role in this thesis. As the body is a centre of the state (Meizer and Norberg, 1998), it serves as both the legitimisation and de-legitimisation of power. The criticism of revolutionary art has accused it of being fascist (Poshyananda, 1992; Wright, 1992) but this thesis argues that the armoured body found in the sculptures shown at the Annual Constitution Fairs between 1937 and 1938 provided a new aesthetic language for the Thai working class. The strong and muscular body in these sculptures needs to be seen as not just a mere Western imitation but a mark of the relationship between artistic conventions and ideology, political beliefs and social class (Antal, 1966; Grosz, 1994; Skeggs, 1997). Thus, the refined and classical statue of King Prajadhipok after the fall of the revolutionary regime indicates the change in perception of the ideal body in relation to politics (Foucault, 1991; Butler, 1993; Siebers, 2000). By engaging with the rise and fall of the People's Party, this thesis investigates different types of

[20] Maurice Halbwachs' concept of collective memory argues that individual's memory is constructed and can be understood within social structures and institutions. See Halbwachs, Maurice (1992) *On Collective Memory*, trans. and written introduction by Lewis A. Coser, Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press. Jan Assmann developed it further in the late 1980s. Assmann coined the term "cultural memory" to explain how cultural formation and institutional communication conveyed and sustained memory in the society. See Assmann, Jan and Czaplicka, John (1995) 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity' *New German Critique*, No. 65, Cultural History/Cultural Studies (Spring-Summer), pp. 125-133. The contemporary memory studies in relation to the nation state and the national memory evolve around these concepts. See for example Pierre Nora's volumes *Les lieux de mémoire* (1984-1992); Lowenthal, David (1985) *The Past is a Foreign Country*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Antze, Paul and Lambek, Michael (eds.) (1996) *Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory*, New York; London: Routledge; Sturken, Marita (1997) *Tangled Memories: The Vietnam War, the AIDS Epidemic, and the Politics of Remembering*, Berkeley; London: University of California Press and Koureas, Gabriel (2007) *Memory, Masculinity, and National Identity in British Visual Culture, 1914-1930: A Study of Unconquerable Manhood*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

[21] The body politics refers to power relations between the human body and society; how society regulates the body and how individuals or groups struggle over the social control of the body. See for example Welton, Donn (ed.) (1998) *Body and Flesh: A Philosophical Reader*, Cambridge, Mass.; Oxford: Blackwell Publishers; Welton, Donn (ed.) (1999) *The Body: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, 2nd edition, Malden, Mass.; Oxford; Blackwell; Schilder, Paul (1978) *The Image and Appearance of the Human Body: Studies in the Constructive Energies of the Psyche*, New York: International Universities Press; Merleau-Ponty, Maurice (1962) *The Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul; Foucault, Michael (1978) *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1, An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley, London: Allen Lane and Foucault, Michael (1991) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, New Ed Edition, London: Penguin Books and Grosz, Elizabeth (1994) *Volatile Bodies: Towards a Corporeal Feminism*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

the ideal Thai body and the values associated with it, the working class and the upper class and how they are constituted in the Thai national consciousness.

As an invented tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983),[22] commemoration is an important element in legitimising authority and unifying citizens of the nation state (Anderson, 1983).[23] The flowering of interest in war memory and the commemoration of the common soldier by Western scholars provide a vast amount of knowledge on the subject, which goes beyond Western boundaries. Whereas in Thailand, a study of war memory and commemoration, particularly in terms of cultural history and visual culture, has yet to become a key academic concern, works by George L. Mosse (1990), Samuel Hynes (1992), Jay Winter (1995), K. S. Inglis (1993) and T. G. Asplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper (2000) offer methodological and theoretical frameworks for the discussion of Thai commemorative practices. War memory and commemoration will be analysed in relation to Buddhist death rituals and ceremonies to investigate how the fallen were honoured, recognised and represented as national patriots in the state funeral for the 17 fallen soldiers and policemen at Sanam Luang and the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument in 1933, and the funerals of the Red Shirts at Democracy Monument in 2010.

Heritage and nostalgia are interwoven in Thailand's on-going ideological conflict. Here, heritage emerges as what Fredric Jameson calls "nostalgia for the present" (1991).[24]

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[22] Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger introduced the concept of "invented tradition" as a set of practices or traditions that claim to be old but were actually recently invented. The invented tradition is thus a reconstruction of continuity with the past. See Hobsbawm, Eric and Ranger, Terence (eds.) (1983) *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. The concept has been widely used in relation to a study of the modern innovation such as the nation and nationalism. See for example, Anderson, Benedict (1983) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso; Vlatos, Stephen (ed.) (1998) *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*, Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press and Sievers, Marco (2007) *The Highland Myth as an Invented Tradition of the 18th and 19th Century and Its Significance for the Image of Scotland*, GRIN: Verlag.

[23] Like Hobsbawm, Benedict Anderson sees the nation as a product of modernity. His concept of "imagined communities" defines the nation as an imagined political community. The nation-state creates a sense of national unification through various social structures and institutions including museum and commemorative activities. See, Anderson, Benedict (1983) *Ibid*. Anderson or "Kru Ben" (Teacher Ben) for the Thai scholars has published widely on the Thai subjects. See for example, Anderson, Benedict (1977) 'Withdrawal Symptoms: Social and Cultural Aspects of the October 6 Coup' *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, 9:3 (July – September), pp. 13–30; Anderson, Benedict and Mendiones, Ruchira (eds. and trans.) (1985) *In the Mirror: Literature and Politics in Siam in the American Era*, Bangkok: Editions Duang Kamol and Anderson, Benedict (2014) *Exploration and Irony in Studies of Siam over Forty Years*, Ithaca, New York: Southeast Asia Program Publications, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University.

[24] Fredric Jameson's idea of "nostalgia for the present" indicates a desire to hold onto a disappearing world. As part of an analysis on postmodernism (initially published in the journal *New Left Review* in 1984), Jameson explains that a nostalgic/pastiche mode in postmodernist cinema re-created the simulatory image of the presence of a historical period as a sign of crisis in historicity. See Jameson, Fredric, 1991, *Ibid.* Jameson's critique of postmodernism has been discussed and criticised by many scholars. For example, Linda Hutcheon argues that postmodernism works through parody rather than pastiche; it engages with history and, hence, can rethink history. See Hutcheon, Linda (1988) *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction*, London and

Although it has been criticised as aristocratic-reactionary nostalgia (Wright, 1985; Hewison, 1987; Canadine, 1988),[25] a utopian version of the past that may distract people from contemporary issues, this thesis argues that the People's Party's heritage functioned as a progressive mechanism in Thailand's current political upheaval. Thus, the Red Shirts' nostalgia reflects and engages with contemporary crisis. It is not a form of escapism, rather a re-evaluation of the past as a possible solution for the future (Halbwachs, 1992; Boym, 2001).[26]

This thesis argues that the resurrection of the past and historicisation of self (Samuel, 2012)[27] is interconnected in the Red Shirts' commemorative performativities at the People's Party's heritage. It has subsumed the revolutionary memory and established a living connection with the revolutionary regime. Since heritage is both a source and marker of identity (Peleggi, 2002b), it helps to construct collective identity and accelerates collective acts of remembrance. The Red Shirts' commemoration at the People's Party's heritage sites can be seen as "collective rituals" (Bosco, 2001) that create kinship bonds between the movement and the revolution. In this respect, the People's Party becomes the ideological ancestor of the Red Shirts. The Revolution of 1932 is interpreted as an "unfinished mission" and becomes the driving force of the Red Shirts' demonstrations.

New York: Routledge. See also Kellner, Douglas (ed.) (1989) *Postmodernism, Jameson, Critique*, Washington, DC: Maisonneuve.

[25] On one hand, critics such as Patrick Wright, Robert Hewison and David Cannadine view heritage as a mark of society's illness because it makes people obsess with the idealised past rather than the present or future. See Wright, Patrick (1985) *On Living in an Old Country: The National Past in Contemporary Britain*, London: Verso; Hewison, Robert (1987) *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline*, London: Methuen and Cannadine, David (1988) 'The Past in the Present' in Smith, Lesley M. (ed.) *The Making of Britain: Echoes of Greatness*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, p. 9-20. On another hand, heritage is criticised as highly capitalist as it is an attempt to commodifying the past for tourist spectacle. See Corner, John and Harvey, Sylvia (1991) *Enterprise and Heritage: Crosscurrents of National Culture*, London: Routledge and Fladmark, J. M. (1993) *Heritage: Conservation, Interpretation and Enterprise: Papers Presented at the Robert Gordon University Heritage Convention*, London: Donhead. For a detailed discussion on these aspects of heritage and its popularity, see Samuel, Raphael (2012) *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture*, 1st revised edition, London and New York: Verso.

[26] Collective memory discourse states that historical memory is a reconstruction of the past by social institutions and, in some circumstances; it is a result of a society's current needs. See Halbwachs, Maurice (1992) *Ibid.* In a similar manner, a study of nostalgia by Svetlana Boym argues that the longing for the past usually occurs in a time of historical upheavals. Boym's argument on the function of nostalgia as a vision of future is thus contrasted with scholars of the 1980s and 1990s who see obsession with a utopian past as a social disease or a sign of national decadence. Her discussion on restorative and reflexive nostalgia offers a new perspective on the works of memory in the present. See Boym, Svetlana (2001) *The Future of Nostalgia*, New York: Basic Books.

[27] Raphael Samuel is a pioneer of "history from below" in the 1960s. He initiated the History Workshop movement and the History Workshop Journal at Ruskin College where he engaged in debate on heritage with Patrick Wright. His *Theatres of Memory*, the first volume of a trilogy (first published in 1996), discusses the place of the past in the present. The chapter *The Heritage-Baiters* deals with the heritage boom in Britain in the 1980s and responds to critics of heritage industry such as Patrick Wright, Robert Hewison and David Cannadine, among others. See Samuel, Raphael (2012) *Ibid*.

This thesis proposes to see the People's Party's heritage as sites of memory that have the capacity to frame the redshirts' struggle with the revolution: '*lieux de mémoire* only exist because of their capacity for metamorphosis, an endless recycling of their meaning and an unpredictable proliferation of their ramifications' (Nora, 1989: 19). These sites demonstrate how representations of the past relate to contemporary political movements (Taylor and Whittier, 1995; Rupp and Taylor, 2003) and function in the mobilisation of the strategies of activists (Jelin and Hershberg, 1996; Dovey, 2001; Jelin, 2003). By analysing the performative dimension of the People's Party's heritage sites and the commemorative activities around them, this thesis reveals the power of the visual culture in association with the political struggle.

This thesis covers most of the major works of the revolutionary regime except for the Chai Samoraphum Monument (Victory Monument, 1941). The visual culture of the Franco-Thai War (1940-1941) and the Second World War (started in Thailand at the end of 1940) characterises the military aspect in the revolutionary cultural nationalism and contributes largely to both the artistic and memorial practices. Yet it is not in the scope of this thesis, as it relates to international politics more than the local debates on Thai democracy. There are a number of Second World War memorials erected after the end of the People's Party regime such as the Thai Bravery Monument (Anusaowari Wira Thai, 1952), the Bravery of the 8th December Monument (Anusaowari Wira Kam 8 Thanwakhom 2484, 1950) and the World War II Youth Volunteers Monument (Anusaowari Yuwa Chon Thahan, 1981). Future studies on these memorials should be conducted as a distinctive field of research.

The structure of this thesis follows a chronological order from 1932 to 2010. Chapters one, two and three focus on the various forms of visual culture and performative acts of the People's Party. They investigate the way in which the People's Party's memorials, funeral crematoria, monuments and sculpture constituted the ideology of the new constitutionalist regime. Chapters four and five concentrate on understanding how the return of royalism and the uprising of the lower class in the post-People's Party period were expressed through commemorative practices in relation to these cultural artefacts. The relationship between memory and forgetting in the construction of an appropriate memory (Casey, 1987; Lowenthal, 1993; Geary, 1995; Henderson, 1999; Forty and Küchler, 1999) is explored throughout the thesis. The question posted by the pro-liberal online media, Thai E-

News[28] 'Why there is no monument of the People's Party at the National Assembly?' under the image of the King Prajadhipok Royal Statue at the National Assembly encapsulates an attempt to establish different memories of the two ideologies discussed in this thesis.

To begin with the transitional moment in 1932, the first chapter examines the space of Dusit Palace, which included the Royal Plaza, the Equestrian Statue of King Chulalongkorn and the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall in relation to the People's Party's constitutional acts between 24th June and 10th December. The Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall in particular is a symbol of the absolutist regime; it provides a perfect ground for the ideological challenge. This chapter explores the formation of the new constitutionalist regime through the People's Party's performative acts on this royal space: the reading of the Announcement of the People's Party No. 1 on 24th June 1932, the attachment of the People's Party's Plaque (Mut Khana ratsadon) on 24th June 1936 and the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony on 10th December 1932. The photographs of King Prajadhipok granting the first constitution and the circulation of these images will be analysed as an act of constituting, authorising and propagating the new constitutionalist regime. The images of the King and *phan ratthathammanun*, a Book of Constitution on an ornate double tray are considered as representative of the compromise between the old and the new power as well as part of the People's Party's political propaganda.

Chapter two concentrates on the transformation of *phan ratthathammanun*. The image of *phan ratthathammanun* first appears in an anti-royalist context after the People's Party put down the Boworadet Rebellion in 1933. It has shifted from a symbol of royal authorisation to a symbol of constitutionalism, the supreme ideology of the Thai nation. This chapter discusses the image of *phan ratthathammanun* in relation to the visual culture of the Boworadet war commemoration: the Safeguarding the Constitution Medal (Phithak Ratthathammanun Medal), the funeral rite and the Grand Cremation of the seventeen soldiers and policemen who died fighting the Boworadet Rebellion at Sanam Luang and the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument (Anusaowari Phithak Ratthathammanun) in Lak Si. The presence of *phan ratthathammanun* in this context marks the separation of constitutionalism from royalism and establishes it as a stand-alone symbol of a supreme ideology worth dying for. This chapter analyses the visual culture of the post-Boworadet

[28] The question originally posted in Thai E-News blog was deleted but the link remained in Thai E-News Facebook, which was posted on 26th June 2013. See https://www.facebook.com/ThaiENews/posts/482551595152522?stream_ref=5, Accessed 5th November 2014.

Rebellion in relation to the formation of the Boworadet Rebellion war memory and the new identity of the Thai people as citizens of the nation instead of subjects of the King.

The art competition and exhibition in the Annual Constitution Fair provides the focus for Chapter three. At the zenith of the revolutionary regime, the Fine Art Department (Krom Silpakorn) under Luang Wichitwatakan promoted representations of the commoner in works of art as central to the nation. The central argument of this chapter is the adoption of Western realism as the new aesthetic language of the working class. The image of a strong, armoured body provides a critique of the upper class as well as a new model of the ideal Thai body. The chapter focuses on how body politics manifested itself in sculptures exhibited in the Constitutional Fairs between 1937 and 1938 and how they served as a tool for the eradication of social hierarchy and for nation-building. The performativities of these pedagogical sculptures will be discussed in relation to the discourses of the nation's progress and prosperity. The revolution's type of desirable body is indeed the muscular body of the commoner who is ready to work and sacrifice him/herself for the nation.

The fall of the revolutionary regime in 1947 led to the formation of neo-royalism and royalist democracy. Chapter four analyses the reincarnation of the image of Prajadhipok in the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony as a demonstrative sign of the return of the monarchy in politics. It argues that the combination of the King's iconic image from the ceremony in 1932 and the passage from the King's abdication letter written in 1935 in the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok (unveiled in 1981) has constituted a new memory about the origins of Thai democracy. The chapter explores how this statue, together with other forms of narrative telling and memory making, re-constructed a new discourse on Thailand's political transformation towards democracy. As a symbol of neo-royalism that combines democracy with anti-communism, the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok recasts the 1932 Revolution as an "early ripped, early rotted" act of the People's Party whereas Prajadhipok re-appears as the Father of Thai Democracy. The chapter interrogates the re-contextualisation and transformation of the King's image and explores its performative quality in changing perceptions towards the People's Party and the monarchy.

The central concerns of Thai politics remain the issues of the true begetter of Thai democracy and owner of sovereign power. The last chapter discusses the revival of the People's Party's memory by the Red Shirts movement in relation to contemporary politics. Following the 2006 royally supported military coup that toppled the elected government of Thaksin Shinawatra, the anti-coup movement known as the Red Shirts has employed the memory of the long-neglected People's Party in their protest against the unelected, 2010

military-backed Democrat Party government of Abhisit Vejajiva. This chapter argues that nostalgia and fantasy of a utopian future are drawn together in the Red Shirts' commemorative activities at the People's Party's heritages. It interrogates the Red Shirts' operation of the revival of the People's Party's memory and the commemorative endeavours at the three memorials built during the People's Party's regime, the People's Party's Plaque, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument and Democracy Monument, in order to show that these are not simply sites of political activities but also the performative forces of the movement as well as mechanisms of subsuming memory.

This thesis wishes to contribute to both the study of visual culture in relation to the debate around Thai democracy, as well as Thai art historiographical practices. It attempts to count the uncounted: to integrate "the wrong" to the whole Thai art historical narrative. No longer foreign, the People's Party's art and cultural artefacts are indeed artistic syncretises that are intrinsic to the contestation between the revolution and the counter-revolution. The performativities of the People's Party's art and cultural artefacts demonstrate the power of visual culture as both constructive and destructive forces in Thailand's ideological battlefield.

Chapter 1

Marking Space/Marking Ideologies: The Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall in Transition

In the early morning of 24th June 1932, Phraya Phahon Phonphayuhasena (Phot Phahonyothin, hereinafter, Phahon), the head of the Military Faction and leader of the People's Party (Khana ratsadon) stood on the Royal Plaza, an open space at the end of Ratchadamnoen Avenue[29] and part of the royal residential complex, the Dusit Palace, and read the Announcement of the People's Party No. 1.[30] The colonel declared that, '[T]he time has ended when those of royal blood farm on the backs of the people. Things which everyone desires, the greatest happiness and progress which can be called *si ariya*, will arise for everyone' (The People's Party, 1932).[31]

As the leader of the revolution and person of authority, Phahon's reading is a performing and enacting of action: a performative utterance (Austin, 1976) and authoritative speech (Butler, 1993). Bringing in the new ideology of constitutionalism, his illocutionary speech transformed Siam[32] into a new subject and marked an interpellation of a constitutionalist state (Althusser, 2001). This message indicated that the 1932 Revolution signalled the end of the government under King Prajadhipok (King Rama VII, r. 1925-1935) and brought about a better life, a "*si ariya*" or "golden age" civilisation according to Buddhist beliefs, for the Thai people.

The constitutionalist Siam did not solely come into existence by means of language. The hailing and enactment of this new state also involved a performance in space, as Pierre Nora says, space is 'a territory in which power is exercised and, in consequence, history evolved' (2006: VII). The declaration of the new regime on the Royal Plaza encapsulated the main topic that this chapter attempts to analyse: the heart of the capital as both a scene and a mechanism of revolt. The central argument of this chapter concerns the performative

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[29] The word "*racha*" in Ratchadamnoen Avenue or the "Royal promenade" derives from *raj* meaning royal.

[30] Nai Honhuai (Sinlapachai Chanchaloem), the royalist documentary writer who wrote intensively about Thai history and politics claimed that the Announcement of the People's Party No. 1, which was distributed to the public after the revolution was not the document that Phahon had read in the morning. The writer, whose source was the Navy Faction of the People's Party, claimed that Phahon declared the revolution from a document written in German which was much shorter that the Announcement of the People's Party No. 1. See Nai Honhuai (pseudonym) (1978) *Thahan ruea patiwat* [The navy revolution], 2nd edition, Bangkok: Nai Honhuai. Nevertheless, the content of the two announcements is almost the same. This thesis does not further engage with the debate about the first announcement and will consider the Announcement of the People's Party as the first one in official discourse.

[31] Pridi Banomyong, the head of the Civilian Faction of the People's Party composed the Announcement of the People's Party's No. 1. This thesis refers to the translation by Chris Baker and Pasuk Phongpaichit. The full translation is available on, http://www.openbase.in.th/files/pridibook049 part2 _1.pdf, Accessed 7th September 2011.

[32] The country's name was changed to Thailand in 1939.

efficacy of the Dusit Palace, which included the Royal Plaza, the Equestrian Statue of King Chulalongkorn and the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall in relation to two important events: the revolution of 24th June 1932 and the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony of 10th December 1932. The landscape of the Dusit Palace, particularly the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall was not only a platform for political events, an arena of overt contestation and a public sphere of appearance (Arendt, 1958 in Casey, 1998), but also a performative force of the events.[33] Judith Butler's theory of performativity (1993) and W. J. T. Mitchell's notion of landscape as an instrument or agent of power (1994)[34] provide theoretical frameworks for an analysis of the People's Party's acts on this landscape of sovereignty and an exploration of the role of the landscape of the Royal Plaza in the formation of the constitutional nation-state. In short, the landscape is considered to be a productive force in the formation of the new identity of the Siamese state.

The notions of liminality and ritual ceremony (Gennep, 1960; Turner, 1991) will also be employed to investigate this constitutional act. As constituting the speech act involved visibility and spectatorship (Austin, 1976; Parker and Sedgwick, 1995:11), the importance of witnessing led the People's Party to seriously consider its revolutionary acts within the domains of ritual performance and media propaganda (Hughes-Freeland, 1998). This chapter will explore the relationship between visibility and spectatorship as they occurred in the acts of 24th June and 10th December by addressing them as political plays or social dramas (Turner, 1974). This dramaturgical metaphor provides a perspective in which the political actions may be understood as an intersection between performativity of place and ritual

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[33] The "cultural turn" which occurred in the mid-1980s led to the consideration of landscape as socially-produced space. Landscape is seen as a site of representation, a locus of power and resistance, as it replicates relations of power through its ownership, management and manipulation. See for example Daniels, S. J. (1989) 'Marxism, Culture and Duplicity of Landscape' in Peet, R. and Thrift, N. (eds.) *New Models in Geography: The Political Economy Perspective*, London: Unwin Hyman, p. 196-220 and Moore, Niamh and Whelan, Yvonne (eds.) (2007) *Heritage, Memory and the Politics of Identity: New Perspectives on the Cultural Landscape*, Aldershot: Ashgate. W. J. T. Mitchell also regards landscape as a form of cultural practice. See Mitchell, W. J. T., (ed.) (1994) *Landscape and Power*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press. The related issues of "place" and "space" are also explored by a number of scholars. See Harvey, David (1989), *Ibid.*; Casey, Edward S. (1998) *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*, Berkeley, Calif.; London: University of California Press and Lefebvre, Henri (2003) *Ibid*.

[34] In *Landscape and Power*, Mitchell discusses two major approaches in the study of landscape in art. The first focuses on the reading of the history of landscape through the history of landscape painting. See Gombrich, E. H. (1966) *Norm and Form: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance*, 2nd edition, London: Phaidon and Clark, Kenneth (1976) *Landscape into Art*, London: J. Murray. The second attempts to read landscape as a sign or cultural form. See for instance Pugh, Simon (1990) *Reading Landscape: Country, City, Capital*, Manchester: Manchester University Press. See the introduction in Mitchell, W. J. T., (ed.) (1994) *Ibid.*, p. 1-4. Although *Landscape and Power* mainly discusses pictorial landscape, such as paintings, drawings and photographs, the way it perceives landscape as a form of cultural practice can be applied to examinations of actual landscapes, such as the Dusit Palace.

performance, whilst turning the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall into a liminal theatrical space or a site of passage (Hastrup, 1998). Lastly, the chapter will investigate how the press media transmuted this ritual in the closed-space of the Throne Hall into a public spectacle (Debord, 1995) and created the photographs of Prajadhipok in the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony of 10th December 1932 as part of the state's propaganda machine (Jamieson and Waldman, 2004).

From Palace to Place of Detention: The Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall in Revolt

The Siamese royal elites adopted Western art, culture and sciences as a model of civilisation since the time of King Mongkut (King Rama IV, r. 1851-1868) (Winichakul, 2000). The term "*siwilai*" was created as a transliteration of the English word "civilised" and refers to both refined manners and etiquette and an achieved state of development or progress.[35] The construction of the Western-style Dusit Palace, a compound of royal residencies under the command of King Chulalongkorn (King Rama V, r. 1868-1910), son of Mongkut and father of Prajadhipok, reflects the attempt to create the image of a civilised and modernised monarch through the expansion of the royal residential area and urban space. Such actions accorded with the embellishment and monumentalisation of urban spaces that was at that time being carried out in Europe and in its colonies (Peleggi, 2002a: 76).[36] The

[35] The adoption of Western art, culture and sciences by the Siamese royal elites was a response to Western colonialism in the late Nineteenth century. Thongchai Winichakul argues that this attempt to promote modernisation and civilisation were not only strategies to defend against colonisation but rather self-modifications by the Siamese ruling elites to present themselves as being as "modern" as their European counterparts. See Winichakul, Thongchai (2000) 'The Quest for "Siwilai": A Geographical Discourse of Civilizational Thinking in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century Siam' *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (August), pp. 528-549 and Peleggi, Maurizio (2002a) *Lord of Things: The Fashioning of the Siamese Monarchy's Modern Image*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. The impact of Western imperialism on Thai cultural development from the 1850s to the present is also analysed in Harrison, Rachel V. and Jackson, Peter A. (eds.) (2010) *The Ambiguous Allure of the West: Traces of Colonial in Thailand*, Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

[36] Although Siam has never officially been colonised, as it was a buffer zone between the British and French colonies in Southeast Asia, there was an adoption and transmigration of culture due to the contact with the superior Western powers. As such, scholars such as Thongchai Winichakul, Rachel V. Harrison and Peter A. Jackson suggested the term "semi-colonialism" to describe the status of Siam whilst Michael Herzfeld proposed the term, "crypto-colonialism". See Winichakul, Thongchai (2000) *Ibid.*; (2001) Harrison, Rachel V. (2010) 'Introduction: The Allure of Ambiguity: The "West" and the Making of Thai Identities' in Harrison, Rachel V. and Jackson, Peter A. (eds.) *The Ambiguous Allure of the West: Traces of the Colonial in Thailand*, Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, p. 1-36; Jackson, Peter A. (2010) 'The Ambiguities of Semicolonial Power in Thailand The Ambiguities of Semicolonial Power in Thailand' in Harrison, Rachel V. and Jackson, Peter A. (eds.) *Ibid.*, p. 37-56 and Herzfeld, Michael (2010) 'The Conceptual Allure of the West: Dilemmas and Ambiguities of Crypto-Colonialism in Thailand' in Harrison, Rachel V. and Jackson, Peter A. (eds.) *Ibid.*, p. 173-186. Both terms suggested that Siam, in the context of interaction with the West from the 1850s onwards, has passed through many reorientations and reconfigurations in its attempts to follow the powerful, superior cultural Other: the West.

expansion of the royal landscape neatly illustrates the argument that the King's modernisation was interchangeable with Westernisation since it connects to Western colonialism through Occidentalism.[37]

Chulalongkorn visited Europe twice (1897 and 1907) and also travelled to some British colonies in Asia, including Singapore and India. These royal expeditions were essential due to the King's fascination with European art and culture, and drove him to modify his self-image as a modern monarch according to the European model. Letters to his daughter, Princess Nibha Nobhadol, during his tour in 1909 clearly reveal his Occidentalist gaze.[38] *Lords of Life*, a book written by his grandson, Prince Chula Chakrabongse, also reflects Chulalongkorn's admiration for Italian classical architecture: 'It is said they [Thai people who donated a large sum of money to build memorials for the fortieth anniversary of his reign] wanted a vast and grandiose marble memorial like the one in Rome for King Victor Emmanuel II' (Chula Chakrabongse, 1967: 266). While Chula Chakrabongse wrote that the idea of building an Italian-style palace stemmed from the public, who knew the taste of their beloved King—Piya Maharaj (the Great Beloved King), it was in fact arranged by royal initiation.

The Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall (Fig. 1) was built as part of the Dusit Palace to mark the forthcoming fortieth anniversary of Chulalongkorn's reign. The King, who was the origin and epitome of absolute monarchy in Siam, considered the old Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall built by his father in the Grand Palace to be too old and too small to accommodate the royal ceremonies (Ratchakitchanubeksa, Vol. 24, 8th March 1907: 1321). He then expanded the royal residential area which was formerly located within the walls of the inner city, known as Rattanakosin Island, to the outskirts of Bangkok. The Dusit Palace, originally called Dusit Garden Palace (Wang Suan Dusit), consisted of numerous royal residences and gardens and was linked to the Grand Palace by Ratchadamnoen Avenue. This urban expansion and new royal residential area embellished the capital with a Western-style

[37] The study of Occidentalism or a stylised image of the West is part of the larger project of Postcolonial Studies. The images of West in the eyes of its Others, either as object of desire or powerful enemy, has been intensively explored by both Western and non-Western scholars. See for example Carrier, James G. (ed.) (1995) *Occidentalism: Images of the West*, Oxford: Clarendon; Venn, Couze (2000) *Occidentalism: Modernity and Subjectivity*, London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publication; Burama, Ian and Margalit, Avishai (2004) *Occidentalism: The West in the Eyes of Its Enemies*, London: Atlantic Books and Browning, Christopher and Lehti, Margo (eds.) (2010) *The Struggle for the West: A Divided and Contested Legacy*, London: Routledge. For Thailand, see Kitiarsa, Pattana (2010) 'An Ambiguous Intimacy: Farang as Siamese Occidentalism' in Harrison, Rachel V. and Jackson, Peter A. (eds.) *The Ambiguous Allure of the West: Traces of the Colonial in Thailand*, Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, p. 57-74.

[38] These letters were published in a book known as *Klai ban* [Far from home], which provides details of the King's journey in Europe. See Chulalongkorn, King (1923) *Klai ban* [Far from home], Vol. 1 and 2, Bangkok: Sophon Phiphatthanakon.

boulevard and buildings and thus created a new geographical landscape. While David Harvey (1989) explains that the urban process and the flow of capital in Western capitalist cities indicates the landscape of capitalism, in the Thai case it seems rather to reflect a landscape of Occidentalism, which the Siamese ruler built from an appropriation of western capitalist cities. It was thus not an urban process under capitalism but rather consumerism of western civilisation (Peleggi, 2002a).

Chulalongkorn hired a number of Italian architects, engineers and painters to his court. Mario Tamayo, Annibale Rigotti, Carlo Allegri, E. G. Gollo, Gallileo Chini, Carlo Rigoli and Cecare Ferro worked in Siam under the supervision of Chao Phraya Yomaraj (Pan Sukhum). The Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall was built from white marble from Carrara, in a combination of Renaissance, Baroque and Neo-Classic styles, making it the first Western-style palace in Siam. Upon completion the throne hall was formed of a central dome surrounded by six smaller domes and stood approximately 49.5 metres in width, 112.5 metres in length, and 49.5 metres in height.[39] Chulalongkorn died before the project was finished but King Vajiravudh (King Rama VI, r. 1910-1925), his heir and the brother of Prajadhipok, continued the construction. It became the most costly building erected up to that time in Siam.

Although the King did not live long enough to see the completion of his edifice and thus never used it as the grand ceremonial theatre of his reign, the entire project of the Dusit Palace was symbolic of absolutist power, where the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall served as the centre of power. The Equestrian Statue of Chulalongkorn (Fig. 2), which resided forever in the grounds of the Royal Plaza, looking over the country, is a public symbol of the greatness of royal rule. The compositional structure of the complex shows that it was a site of a specific political attitude: absolutism. The commanding position of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall at the end of Ratchadamnoen Avenue, with the Chulalongkorn Equestrian in the foreground, conceptualised the Siamese state apparatus as being under the rule of House Chakri (Fig. 3).

However, this new royal residential area also created an overlap between the royal and the commoner space: first, Ratchadamnoen Avenue, a thoroughfare linking the old and the new palace, was also available for public use and second, the Royal Plaza in front of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall was a royal space (*khet phra ratchasathan*), as well as a

[39] For the details of the construction and the interior decoration of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall, see Poshyananda, Apinan (1994) *Western-Style Painting and Sculpture in the Thai Royal Court*, Vol. 2, Bangkok: Bureau of the Royal Household.

public square. Hence, as a liminal space, a space betwixt and between (Turner, 1974) the royal world and the commoner's world, the Dusit Palace was perfectly situated to become a site that would be caught up in the class struggle. Furthermore, as a signifier of both absolutist power and modernisation, the palace's association with the hierarchical social relations stimulated the uprising of the revolt as a new beginning for the lower class, as Pierre Nora has argued, 'the Revolution is the decisive moment when the complex that ties the national idea to the space of sovereignty is put in place' (2006: IX). The Dusit Palace appeared as an explicit locus and target for political organising (Lefebvre, 2003): an ideal place for the new power structure to be proclaimed. This royal landscape therefore became a vital component in reclaiming and defining the new phase of the Thai nation—the constitutional regime—and the new form of modernity, that is, constitutionalism, which meant democracy.[40]

> Once space is dissociated from the particular bodies that occupy it, it is bound to be emptified of the peculiarities and properties that these same bodies (beginning with their outer surface) lend to the place they inhabit—or that they take away from places by internalisation or reflection (Casey, 1998: 197)

The absence of the particular bodies in specific place was greatly significant to the People's Party's plan for the revolution in 1932. Before 24th June, Prajadhipok was on a holiday at Klai Kangwon Palace (Far from Worries Palace) in the southern seaside town of Hua Hin. His absence from the administrative centre, the heart of House Chakri, paved the way for the People's Party to seize the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall and transform it into a place of detention. A few hours before Phahon declared the revolution, the People's Party captured the regent Prince Paribatra Sukhumbhand, Prince of Nakhon Sawan (hereinafter, Prince Paribatra), Prince Narisara Nuvadtivongs (hereinafter, Prince Naris) and Prince Damrong Rajanubhab (hereinafter, Prince Damrong) and the senior members of the administration and held them in custody at the palace. A message was sent to Prajadhipok inviting him to return to the capital to rule as a constitutional King and accommodate the new regime; but should he refuse the revolutionary would declare a republic (Kasetsiri, 2008: 38).

[40] It is evident that both the monarchy and the revolutionaries perceived Western civilisation as a mode of modernity, yet their appropriation of Western culture was designed to meet different ends: absolutism and democracy.

The People's Party revolution on 24th June 1932 destroyed the hierarchical class system in favour of greater equality and even managed to shift the sacred to the profane, as the throne hall, which had formerly functioned as a reception hall and meeting place of the Prajadhipok's Royal Council, was turned into a temporary prison for some council members.[41] These princes were both an object of contestation and the first group of the royal family to witness the formation process of a new political transition that would drastically lower both their power and status. Being imprisoned in their own palace, the royals were horrified by the content of the speech given in the Announcement, particularly when it was declared that: 'There is no country in the world that gives its royalty so much money as this, except the Tsar and the German Kaiser, whose nations have already overthrown their thrones' (The People's Party, 1932). The revolution thus reversed both the status of the palace and royalty from superior to inferior; their social status would be allowed to recover although it would always remain lower than their previous status, and only if the King accepted the People's Party's conditional offer.

The selection of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall as a place of detention for the royal custodies indicates a special bond between body and place. As an "expansive and opening-up space" (*l'espace spatialisant*) where lived body and the bodily movement serve as its origin (Merleau-Ponty, 1962), the bodies of the royals in custody served as a place-productive force that transformed the palace into a prison house, which, in turn, controlled and incarcerated their bodies. In this sense, the "position" was strictly relational and attached to parts of bodies as well as to parts of space (Casey, 1998: 207).[42] In a memoire of the 1932 Revolution, Princess Phunphisamai Ditsakul, the daughter of Prince Damrong, whilst delivering lunch to her father, describes his cell as follows:

> Windows and ventilators were sealed with wood and nails, despite that [they] had already been protected by balusters. Cabinets, tables and chairs were reversed and placed against the wall. There was a bed, big enough for two persons to push through, mosquito net and a small pillow. The floor was extremely dirty with footprints because no one cleaned it. There was only one door for airing and in front of the door were two soldiers carrying bayonets (Ditsakul, 1991: 27).

[41] The Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall was to become even more threatening for Prajadhipok and Queen Rambai Barni; as the Queen recalled that during their return to the capital, on the 26th June, there were guns pointing towards their vehicle from the throne hall. Numnonda, Thamsook (1992) *Lakhon kan mueang: 24 mithunayon 2475* [The theatre of politics: 24th June 1932], Bangkok: Samakhom Prawatsat, p. 17.

[42] The linkage between body and space has been widely investigated by generations of philosophers. Edward Casey offers a comprehensive survey and critical engagement with the philosophical history of place/space in relation to body through a discussion of the works of Immanuel Kant, Alfred North Whitehead, Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. See Casey, Edward, S. (1998) *Ibid*.

Whereas dirt, untidiness and the re-composition of the furniture in the palace suggested the loss of monarchical power, it was indeed the imprisonment of the royal members that generated a new status for the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall - as an anthromophisation of the Chakri monarch. While Prajadhipok was far away in the south of the country and the representatives of the monarch, the arrested princes, were detained inside the palace and presumably, isolated from the outside world, the palace was transformed into a representational body of the royalty and therefore a witness to the revolution. This highlights the intended act of defiance towards the old regime as the revolutionaries took control of its sacred place, a location in which the royal identity had been metaphorically converted into the very landscape.[43] In other words, the identity of the Royal Plaza as the royal space, a symbol of the absolutist regime and a signifier of royal sovereignty, stimulated a new status for the place as both a target and primary witness of the revolution, *as if* this place had become the monarch. Being controlled by the revolutionary, the anthropomorphised palace and the royal captives were thus 'compulsory witnesses' to the event and they had to observe the revolution unfold as a political theatre play, a 'spectacle that denies the audience's ability to look away from it or equally to intervene in it' (Austin, 1976: 11). The royal custodies, demarcated from the events occurring outside the throne hall, were only a passive actor of the revolution.

The presence of these witnesses completed the act of revolution. When Phahon made his resounding address in the grounds of the Royal Plaza, "All the people" (The People's Party, 1932), it was not only directed to the people of Siam, who had gathered around the place with curiosity, but also to the members of the royal family. Yet, they were not given the chance to have a visual encounter with the moment of the declaration of the new state. The only royal eyes that witnessed the proclamation of the new Siam were the artificial eyes of Chulalongkorn in statuary form. The oratory: 'You, all of the people should know that our country belongs to the people—not to the King, as has been deceitfully claimed' (cf.) took place in a very specific position, the heart of royal absolutism, in front of the statue of Chulalongkorn who was permanently looking over the country. The act of 24th June thus created the new nation-state through a reclaimation and re-sanctification of the country's

[43] Tadhg O'Keeffe notes that the social role of landscape lies in the way in which a community may locate its identity with a landscape or have its identity metaphorised as landscape. See O'Keeffe, Tadhg (2007) 'Landscape and Memory: Historiography, Theory, Methodology' in Moore, Niamh and Whelan, Yvonne (eds.) *Ibid*., p. 9.

territory as a land that belongs to its people, the commoners, who had been emancipated from a state of slavery, 'some called *phrai*, some called *kha*'[44] and animal (cf.).

In addition, the use of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall as a place of detention reflects that while the demarcation physically set royalty apart from the event, it also took on a symbolic dimension terminating them from the ruling and administrative positions of the new system. The transformation of the political landscape, which took place through the actual landscape, thus illustrates the spatial dimension of the revolution. Indeed, making the declaration of the new regime on royal ground signified a claim of symbolic ownership over the landscape and as such, by 28th June 1932, the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall had been converted into the sittings of the National Assembly. The monarch no longer ruled the realm because 'our country belongs to the people' (cf.). The transformation of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall from an administrative centre of the Royal Council to the National Assembly of the commoner government illustrates the possession of State power during the political class struggle through the seizure of the State apparatus (Althusser, 2001: 94).

The People's Party's act of defiance, levelled at the absolutist system, was also manifested in the attachment of the People's Party's Plaque (Mut Khana ratsadon) or Democracy Plaque (Mut Prachathippatai) in 1936 (Fig. 4) near the Chulalongkorn statue (Fig. 5).[45] Although small and difficult to notice, the plaque created a physical and symbolic mottle - a dark spot on the royal space. It indicates the Royal Plaza as a commemorative landscape of the revolution. However, despite its importance in memorialising the revolutionary moment, there are insufficient historical records concerning the actual plaque. The name of the designer is unidentified and the motivation for selecting a *prajamyam* motif, which is one of the basic motifs of traditional Thai ornaments (*lai thai*) as a central element is unexplained. A *prajamyam* is a square floral motif with four triangular petals which functions as a decorative motif. The details of the petals may vary as there are several types of *prajamyam* but all of them are restricted within a square frame and each petal is always intact. The *prajamyam* in the People's Party's plaque was cut in half to present the following

[44] *Phrai* (plebian or commoner) and *kha* (slave) are forms of slavery in Siam. Although *phrai* were free to live and work as they wished, they owed service to the sovereign or nobleman's masters for three months of the year according to the corvée system. Chulalongkorn had abolished the corvée and slavery system but the terms remained as references to the low status of the commoner.

[45] There are no visual records of the moment of declaration and no evidence of which direction Phahon looked as he read the Announcement but the plaque confirms his position at the Royal Plaza. It should also be noted that Siang Si Krung Film (also known as Si Krung Film) had recorded the 24th June 1932 Revolution. The company sold the film to two American companies in but they were never released because "there was no shooting in the Thai coup d'état". The original film has been lost. Kanchanakkhaphan, Sanga (Khun Wichitmattra) (1998) *Nang Thai nai adit* [Thai films in the past], Bangkok: Watcharin Kanphim, p. 133.

commemorative sentence: '[H] here, in the dawn of 24 June 1932, Khana ratsadon [The People's Party] has brought forth a constitution for the glory of the nation'.

While the form of this commemorative plaque was based on a traditional motif, it did not suggest continuity with the past (Hynes, 1992) but rather a disruption or fundamental change (Fussell, 1975; Eksteins, 1989). As Thai traditional arts deeply resonate with religiosity and hierarchy, the division of a *prajamyam* symbolised a radical break and transgression of the hierarchical order by the newcomers. The split *prajamyam* echoed the act of announcing the revolution at the Royal Plaza in 1932 and it emphasised that the People's Party's innovation emerged on the ground of destruction and transformation of the traditional or royal-related signs: an aesthetic terrain. The enlightening aspect of 24th June 1932 was also highlighted in the phrase, "in the dawn", which implied an escape from the darkness of the old regime and the inauguration of a whole new *si ariya* society.[46]

The marking of space through the use of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall on 24th June1932 and the attachment of the People's Party Plaque on 10th December 1936 created a new political geography of the Royal Plaza. It exhibits the beginning of constitutionalism, both in the public space of the Royal Plaza and the private royal space of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall. In this circumstance landscape was a mode of political discourse (Bermingham, 1994). The Revolution of 24th June, which marked a marriage between politics and geography, indicated the intervention and the defiance of the revolutionaries towards the royalists. And, in return, it revealed how the power of landscape lay in its ability to reify and reaffirm political vision. The next section remains focused on the landscape of the Dusit Palace as a performative force in the formation of identity (Mitchell, 1994). Modified into a National Assembly for the commoner government, the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall functioned to articulate and promote the People's Party's ideology. The following section will discuss the role of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall in the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony on 10th December 1932, the birthplace of the first Thai Constitution, through an examination of the images of Prajadhipok and the ritual performance.

[46] The People's Party's association with the sun is also shown through the image of Aruna devaputra, a charioteer of Phra Athit (Sun God) in Hinduism. Chatri Prakitnonthakan remarks that the image of Aruna devaputra, signifying sunlight at dawn, is seen for the first time in Thai architecture in the revolutionary period. They appear on the pediment of the chapel of Democracy Temple (Wat Prachathippatai) or Phra Si Mahathat Temple and the pediment of the entrance to Democracy Monument (Anusaowari Prachathippatai); both designed by the architect of the government Phra Prompichit (Au Laphanon). Prakitnonthakan suggests that the use of the Aruna devaputra implies the beginning of democracy in Thailand, as if the sun has risen after the darkness of absolutism. See Prakitnonthakan, Chatri (2009) *Ibid.*, p. 114.

Constituting the Constitution: Photographs of King Prajadhipok in the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony

> 'Bestowing and declaring and granting to his subjects so as to establish them in liberty and sovereignty completely from this day henceforth' (Ratchakitchanubeksa, 10th December 1932, Vol. 49: 533).

The scrivener, on behalf of King Prajadhipok, in the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony announced the above message on 10th December 1932. While the People's Party revolution had technically changed the Thai political system on 24th June 1932, this message suggests that the liberty and self-administration of the Thai people was "granted" by royal will. This section thus discusses the royal granting ceremony as a performative ritual in which the monarchical power and its location — the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall — were employed to authorise, enunciate and announce a new political regime. In the year of the revolt, the new status of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall emerged as a space of liminality, a space betwixt and between (Turner, 1969) the royal person and the commoner, the past and the future, and the imagination and the real. The Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall became the threshold for establishing the constitutional state - a site of passage where a new state of affairs emerged (Hastrup, 1998).

The central premise of this chapter is the constitutional act of King's Prajadhipok in establishing the new regime. This chapter focuses on how the King's religious-based monarchical power, traditional customs, ritual and the power of space, in other words, the old institution as framed within the photographs of the event, ultimately supported the establishment of a new political system. The chapter seeks to contextualize the ritual process of bringing the new regime into being by concentrating on a series of photographic images of Prajadhipok in the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony and explains how these images functioned in the broader aspects of visual culture in the People's Party era. According to Guy Debord's *The Society of the Spectacle* (1995: 12), 'The spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images.' By placing the ritual in relation to performance and press media (Hughes-Freeland, 1998), these photographs not only documented the performance of a ritual but also, and more importantly, articulated and reinforced the People's Party's ideology of constitutionalism among the Thai people. The following discussion of ritual performance is in relation to the concepts of liminal space, photography and press media and attempts to explore how the first Thai Constitution and the new regime became fully legitimated.

On 10th December 1932, the date chosen by the royal astrologer performing under Prajadhipok's command, the King arrived at the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall for the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony. The photographs of the ceremony preserve the ephemeral ritual by capturing the climatic moment that brought to life the first Thai constitution. They depict in Fig. 6, Fig. 7 and Fig. 8 how the divine status of His Majesty and his authoritative power were implied and employed in this annunciation and further highlight the theatricality of the event, in which the throne hall functioned as a grand stage.

How can a ritual simultaneously serve as a theatrical performance?[47] While the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall was not an actual theatre, nor was the 10th December ceremony a theatrical performance, these photographs sought to influence the viewer through the use of a highly formalised and deliberate setting. They depicted the setting and sequence of the ritual process as if it was a scene from the theatre with all actors standing in their specified positions. Fig. 6 and Fig. 7 showed that behind the curtains, Prajadhipok was sitting on the throne surmounted by the nine-tiered Great White Umbrella of State. The King appeared in full royal attire, wearing the necklace of the most illustrious Order of Chula Chom Klao and the Maha Kathin Crown, a uniform that made him instantly recognizable as the King. His body in this dress code of honour occupies three-quarters of the space. On the left side of the pictures the seven-tiered umbrella can be seen, with a pair of the umbrellas being placed on the left and the right of the throne as seen in Fig. 8.

Since Prajadhipok's appearance signified the royal dignity of the sovereign and symbolised supreme kingship, his act of signing the constitution can be regarded as a constitutional act: acts of approval of the supreme law of the new regime given by the old, which, in turn, transformed the King himself into the first Thai constitutional monarch. This moment was a definitive moment, the transfer to a new phase for the country, as the King bestowed his administrative power on the Thai people. The 10th December 1932 constitution became in this instant the *first* official constitution of the country.[48] Prajadhipok's acts frozen

[47]A number of anthropologists have compared ritual to theatre particularly in regards to its temporal nature, its in-between-ness quality and involvement to the creation of *communitas* (a social form alternates with social structure) and spectacle. See for example Geertz, Clifford (1966) 'Religion as a Culture System' in Banton, Michael (ed.) *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion*, ASA monograph 3, London: Tavistock Press, p. 1-39; Turner, Victor (1969) *Ibid.*; Myerhoff, Barbara (1990) 'Ritual Performance is Lucid' in Schechner, R. and Appel, W. (eds.) *By Means of Performance: Intercultural Studies of Theatre and Ritual*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 245-249; Drewal, Magaret Thompson (1992) *Yoruba Ritual: Performance, Play, Agency*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press and Hastrup, Kristen (1998) 'Theatre as a Site of Passage: Some Reflections on the Magic of Acting' in Freeland-Hughes, Felicia (ed.) *Ritual, Performance, Media*, London and New York: Routledge, p. 29-45.

[48] The Constitution of the 10th December 1932 was the first official constitution of Thailand. On 27th June 1932, three days after the revolution, the People's Party proposed a constitution to Prajadhipok but the King only

in the photographs highlight the active and transformative aspect of the ritual as they displayed the ritual's transformative capacity and affirmed the status of the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony as a rite of passage (Gennep, 1960). By transforming the country into a constitutional state and the King into the first constitutional King, the ceremony provided liberation from the hierarchical old regime and established an ideological *communitas* (Turner, 1974; Sallnow, 1981) where all Thais were equal.

While Fig. 6 and Fig. 7 highlight the King's body, Fig. 8 offers an unbroken view of the entire palace hall and it is thus clearly evident that the royal place was highly decorative. The high ceiling, emphasised by the height of the wall and the rows of columns and vaults, gives a particular visual impact that diminishes human beings, making them appear smaller. Within the frame of the photograph the scene of the event, which took place at the royal palace, manifests an aesthetic of ornamentation through decoration. Royal items, as well as the body of the King, were all golden, jewelled, highly ornamental and loaded with monarchical-religious connotations that create an aesthetic of ornamentation relating to the pre-revolutionary nationalism of which the monarchy and religion were two of the three core pillars of Thai nationalism. It presented a monarchical-religious form of inspiration, a source of reference and an example of an embodiment of a Thai aesthetic quality. More importantly, it is a class specific aesthetic image deeply rooted in Thailand's class ideology portraying an aesthetic idea which, embedded in the hierarchical structure of Thai society and entrenched in religion, presents the King as a semi-divine being.[49]

Fig. 8 provides a panoramic view of the ceremony, with the King as the focal point of the picture surrounded by the royal pages, members of the royal family, military honour guards, foreign representatives and ministers, as well as the People's Party members. The positions taken by each group in the picture signify their relationships. The King for instance, is sitting at the highest position while everyone else stands on lower ground, suggesting a clear hierarchy based on class, a legacy of the old regime. Sitting under the nine-tiered Great White Umbrella of State surmounting the Throne, Prajadhipok is attributed

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agreed to sign it under the condition that it would be only a "Provisional Constitution". Such tension and compromise between the King and the revolutionary government had started early with the new regime as the King and the royalists took part in drafting the first official constitution and adjusted it accordingly to safeguard the role and importance of the monarchy. See Chaiching, Nattapoll (2013) *Ibid.*

[49]An aesthetic of ornamentation contrasts sharply with the People's Party's aesthetic, which emphasises the concept of simplicity and a desire to get rid of decoration that contains hierarchical connotations. Nevertheless, the People's Party's aesthetic arrived after this incident. For instance, the temporary crematorium for the soldiers who died in the fight with the Boworadet Rebellion in 1933 is one of the earliest examples of aesthetic of simplicity in architecture. The crematorium will be discussed in Chapter 2. See also Prakitnonthakan, Chatri (2005) and (2009) *Ibid*.

supreme authority. The mural painting on the vault ceiling above him depicts his grandfather, King Mongkut (King Rama IV, r. 1851-1868) receiving tribute from priests of different religions as well as a scientist, as the King was known as being a supporter of religions, Buddhism and Christianity, as well as Western sciences (Fig. 9). Although invisible in this photograph, the interior of the domes and vault ceilings of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall were decorated with mural paintings depicting the royal activities and achievements of Prajadhipok's ancestors, the kings of the Chakri Dynasty, from the First to the Sixth reign, as painted by Galileo Chini, Carlo Rigoli and Cecare Ferro (1908-1915) (Poshyananda, 1992).

Having images of the history of the Chakri Dynasty presented on the highest position — the ceiling of the hall — the scene of the ceremony may thus be read in two ways. On the one hand, the images of the past kings, together with the glamorous body of Prajadhipok emphasised the existing hierarchical class ideology rather than replacing it with equality, the new socio-political value. However, on the other hand, these images, as representational bodies of the past kings, were also the means of forcing the monarchs to be witnesses to the transitional moment that would lower their status. These contradictory yet co-existing ideologies are clearly manifested in these photographs. This ambiguity nevertheless emphasises the liminality of the place, a limbo situated betwixt and between the past and future positions (Turner, 1969). Here, the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall functioned as a site of passage (Hastrup, 2012) as it provided a stage that served as a sacred liminal space for a transitional process of the country's ideology. Below a further in depth investigation of how the palace building served as a threshold building, where a new paradigm was formulated and established, is presented.

Fig. 6 and Fig. 7 are both portraits and thus emphasise the King's actions as the viewer's attention is drawn from right to left and from the upright position of the King to his eyes gazing down on his hands. The King's gesture guides the viewer to the focal point of the ceremony, which consists in the King's acts of taking and signing the constitution in front of representatives of the new government standing on lower ground. These photographs create a theatrical sensation; the Maha Kathin Crown on the King's head underlines the high status and sovereign power of the King. Moreover, it also simultaneously serves to direct the gaze of the viewer vertically, making the King look higher, both physically and metaphorically, as a noble man and the head of state. The form of the crown parallels the tiered umbrella on the left; as the outlines of the umbrella press down the constitution presenter and holder, as they both have a lower status.

These two photographs illustrate well Foucault's concept of the body "as [an] object and target of power" (Foucault, 1991: 136), a site where discourses of power inscribed themselves in and are exercised through. Both the King's and the commoners' bodies as well as their manner and dress codes were historically constructed, as Foucault termed them "the docile body", the construction of the body by institutional regulation. They were crafted by the conventions of the Thai court. Sitting on "Phra thi nang phuttan kanchana singhassana", a high pedestal royal throne used only in special royal ceremonies, Prajadhipok was elevated higher than everyone standing in the hall. Yet the King does not need to bow to take the book of the Constitution, inscribed on *samutthai*, a traditional document form that may contain a vast amount of knowledge relating to Buddhist discipline, traditional medicine, history, literature or customary law from the *phan waen fa*, an ornate double tray, often golden or decorated with pearls or mirrors and used to make a presentation to those who have higher status.[50] It was the duty of the commoner to raise this offering up to the monarch. In such a manner, the King's power and sovereignty is clearly exercised through his gestures and thus he must not bow to anyone.[51] The encounter between the two types of body, the sovereign body and the commoner body, as captured in these frames, shows how their respective manners are controlled by a network of relations; the King, whose costume and seating position signify nobility and power, is revered by the politicians who stand on lower ground, a position of inferiority according to Thai tradition.

However, while the positions of the King and the politicians, their manners and the atmosphere of the entire ceremony in Fig. 6 and Fig. 7 signify a royalist ideology, the

[50] The report of the (extraordinary) session of the House of Representatives, on the 16th November 1932, relates that Prajadhipok suggested that the constitution being an important document should therefore be inscribed on *samutthai.* The use of *samutthai* and *phan waen fa* signifies the role of the religion and tradition, as well as the royal intervention, in legitimating the first Thai Constitution. See The National Archives of Thailand, hereinafter, NAT: *Copy of the report of the 34th (extraordinary) session of the House of Representatives,* 16th November 1932, The Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall, p. 357. Since then, all Thai constitutions have been inscribed on *samutthai* except for ones that stemmed from coups.

[51] This chapter argues that the role of the King, as the head of the state, in approving and granting the first official constitution, signified a reconciliation and compromise between him and the People's Party. While the King's was employed to constitute the new political ideology introduced by the revolutionary government, the People's Party, in return, honoured him by titling the event the "Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony". Prior to this event, the Royal Decree of Amnesty for the 1932 Coup was proclaimed on the 26th June 1932 and on the 7th December 1932 the revolution plotters arrived at the Chitralada Royal Villa to apologise for the message in the Announcement of the People's Party No. 1 declared on the revolution day that contained damaging attacks on the King and the absolute monarchy system. The King accepted the apology and praised the plotters for doing it for the good of the country. It should also be noted that the House of Representatives additionally issued an amnesty decree for the prisoners of the Palace Revolt of 1912; a failed upraising against the absolute monarchy which took place in the reign of King Vajiravudh. See Yatabe, Yasukichi (2007) *Kan patiwat lae kan plian plaeng nai prathet Siam: Banthuek khong thut yipun phu hen het kan patiwat 2475* [The revolution and changes in Siam: Memoir of the Japanese ambassador who witnessed the 1932 Revolution], trans. Eichi Murasima and Nakharin Mektrairat, Bangkok: Matichon, p 68. *Thai Kasem* newspaper also reported that the 1912 plotters were invited to the ceremony, *Thai Kasem*, 17th December 1932: 12.

photographs also contain another contrary theme, namely: the change of power and regime from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy. Here Foucault's argument concerning the docile body (1991) can be put forth: as these "docile bodies" do not act according to hierarchical tradition. That is, the acts of giving and the respectful receiving are not performed in order to maintain an absolute monarchy but to generate its subversion, a constitutional monarchy. In other words, Prajadhipok became a liminal body serving as a threshold person, an entrance and source of power that gave birth to the new system.

As shown in Fig. 6, Phraya Manopakorn Nititada (Kon Hutasingha), Second Grand Councillor and Chairman of the Committee of the People (an early version of Prime Minister),[52] together with the committee and ministers who stood out of the frame, presented *phan ratthathammanun,* consisting of the *samutthai* on *phan waen fa* to the King. Fig. 7 offers a picture of an action of particular consequence- the signing moment. After this the King would pass the *samutthai* to the royal page for it to be stamped with the Four Royal Seals: the Great Royal Seal of Maha Ongkan, the Great Royal Seal of Airaphot, the Great Royal Seal of Hong Phiman and the Great Royal Seal of Phra Khrut Phah (Fig. 10).

These seals are the seals of the realm and contain Hindu references, since Thailand's political culture is deeply rooted in a Hindu-Buddhist tradition. Hence why many of the Thai kings were named "Rama" at time of coronation and the coronation ceremony is performed by Saiva brahmanas to bestow on the King divine powers (Devi, 1996: 1). This deifying ritual turns the King's body into a sacred body and thus makes him an embodiment of divinity on earth. The Four Great Seals similarly function as tools to inscribe his divinity onto the subjects he has approved and are thus understood as containing divine power within themselves.

The Great Royal Seal of Maha Ongkan is an emblematic reference to Shiva, the Destroyer of the Universe, as the symbol 'Om' appears inside the royal pavilion flanked by two seven-tiered royal umbrellas. The Great Royal Seal of Airaphot represents Indra, Lord of Heaven, as the image of his vehicle Airavata, a mythical three-head elephant, is shown in the centre flanked by two five-tiered royal umbrellas. The Great Royal Seal of Hong Phiman is associated with Brahma, the Creator of the Universe, whose vehicle is Hansa-vahana, a mythical swan carrying a royal pavilion on its back. The Great Royal Seal of Phra Khrut Phah indicates the link with Vishnu or Narayana, the Preserver of the Universe, through the image of his vehicle, the mythical bird Garuda. As Rama is the avatar of Vishnu, The Great

[52] Phraya Manopakorn Nititada was a judge but not a member of the People's Party. He was selected by the People's Party to head the government as the President of the Committee.

Royal Seal of Phra Khrut Phah is the country's official emblem and the principle seal and Thai kings use this seal to authenticate the King's signature on all official documents (Anuman Ratchathon and Gedney, 1950: 2-12).

Religious ritual and symbols were extremely powerful for legitimising the power of rulers (Bloch, 1992; Cannadine, 1983; Cannadine and Price, 1987). Hence, the use of these seals on *ratthathammanun* signifies the King's power as the supreme authority of the country and the way in which the holy-royal dignity and sovereignty encapsulated the new constitution. The ritualised acts that took place within the religious-monarchical context hence represent a sort of tacit approval granted by the King's divine right. The use of traditional rites, in which the King was the centre and the head of the ceremony, was presumably inspired by the need for legitimacy by the new political system. Following the granting ceremony on 10th December in which Hindu elements played a significant role in the ritual, on 11th and 12th December, Buddhist features and performances were employed in celebration of the new constitution. Thus, the three days of the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony and their associated celebrations involved both the monarchical and religious components of Thai traditions (NAT: (2) Prime Minister's Office: PO 0201.97.4/1).

At the end of the ceremony, the power of the monarchy rooted in Hinduism and Buddhism had been established and the newly invented constitution was reinforced. The use of these age-old institutions and the religious-based traditions had been employed as a deliberate strategy to help take a progressive step forward: in short, the past was used to legitimise the present and to pave the way for the future. Whereas ritual has been perceived as repetitive and structurally restrictive (Tambiah, 1981; Myerhoff, 1992) and therefore to produce conformity (Bloch, 1974), it is argued here that the repetition found in ritual also contains a transformational capacity due to the potential for dynamic interaction between creativity and convention (Drewal, 1992).[53] The strategy of employing the past regime suggested a symbolic victory of the new regime as the old was used to show the favour of the new. The utilisation of tradition and religious ritual in the 10th December ceremony was a process through which the former traditional paradigm was reinvested with vitality in order to help establish constitutionalism, its counter-paradigm. This demonstrated what Victor Turner refers to as "social drama", a rite of passage in which 'conflicting groups and personages attempt to assert their own and deplete their opponents' paradigms' (Turner, 1974: 15).

[53] For a discussion of the dialectic between repetition and variation, see the first chapter 'Theory and Method in the Study of Ritual Performance' in Drewal, Magaret Thompson (1992) *Ibid.*

Nevertheless, the strategy of using the past for the future also implies that the new political ideology had yet to hold authority in itself: in other words, the new regime had no rightfulness unless authorised by the old. In the documentary images, the old power takes the dominant role in the ceremony; the entire ritual is filled with royalist tradition and hierarchical class ideology. The supposed political shift of power from the King to the commoner government thus created a paradoxical status for the constitution as the royal power inherent in the King's body was transferred to the *phan ratthathammanun*, i.e. the *samutthai* on *phan waen fa,* and its images and replicas became objects of veneration. They were treated as if they were the King himself. Prasoet Supsuntorn, the former member of the House of Representatives, for instance, noted that he saw civil servants at Surat Thani train station hold an umbrella for the replica of *phan ratthathammanun* 'as if it was the King, the Ratthathammanun King' (Sapsunthon, 1984: 39). Raising an umbrella for the replica of *phan ratthathammanun* signified that the object was imbued with life by royal power.

However, this incident could also be interpreted in another way. Sapsunthon further remarked that some people even believed that *ratthathammanun* was superior to the King since the new political system clearly stated that the King was also constrained under *ratthathammanun,* the Supreme law. The sacred aspect of *ratthathammanun* was an outcome of the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony; it was the transfer and transformation of royal power. However, it could also be seen as a replacing, as Sapsunthon suggested, because the ceremony was held in order for the old power to be replaced by the new. More importantly, Prajadhipok's sovereign power could exist only with the state's ratification, meaning that the sovereign act of granting the constitution was conditioned under such a paradoxical circumstance. The historical moment of granting the constitution captured in the photographs discussed contained the King's last noble act, the constitutional act, the moment when the old was giving birth to the new.

The next stage in which the act of utterance was performed further emphasised the dialectic of power and negotiation in the process of enacting the new constitution. According to Judith Butler (1997: 78), when power is no longer monopolised by a few sovereign figures but comes from various sources, the resurrection of the loss of power of the sovereign figures takes place in language – in particular, in the figure of the performative. She stated that language becomes a "displaced site of politics", enabling the sovereignty to remain, phantasmatically, in power. The displacement of power in language was thus a form of phantasm driven by loss.

The special royal language used in the ceremony, the codes of conduct and verbal acts performed by the scrivener Phra Sanprasoet (Tri Nakhaprathip), who acted on behalf of the King by reading the granting announcement, helped resurrect the noble status of Prajadhipok, which had been damaged by the revolution of 24th June. In this case, the performative figure was not a figure of sovereignty; while no one heard the King's voice, his sovereign utterance was present and performed by his traditional representative. When the scrivener spoke on behalf of the King, his words were not only the description of what he, as the King's representative, was speaking, but constituted an enactment of the constitution. As an authoritative speaker, his actions should be considered as acts of declaration and validation: turning the constitution into a legitimate being.

The constitution-granting ceremony on 10th December was a theatrical scene set up for a specific purpose. While *racha sap*, the royal vocabulary and bestowal of honours used in the ceremony suggested the illusory resurrection of the old sovereign power, it did not serve the sovereign alone but the revolutionaries too because, as previously stated, the old power was employed to authorise the new. The photographs show the ceremony as a theatrical scene, firstly, in a tangible sense as a highly decorated stage where everyone had specific positions and performed specific actions. Secondly, in a metaphorical sense, the theatrical scene was a scene of a fantasised return of royal power. Ritual according to Myerhoff (1990) and Geertz (1966) is a play staged in between reality and imagination and between fact and possibility: anything can happen in the liminality of ritual because it is a moment "in and out of time" (Turner, 1969).

Accordingly, the granting ceremony could be perceived as a time machine, returning to the moment before 24th June – that is before the regime was changed by the commoners' revolution. Here, this impossible act of returning to the past was a 'performative act of imagination' (Ehrstine, 2012) that enabled the smooth, non-violent transformation of the regime phantasmatically. It was therefore not only in language, the *raja-sap* that phantasmatically resurrected the power of the lost sovereign but the entire ritual ceremony. Everyone in the ceremony played their roles in this masquerade and it was dispersed to the public via the press (a topic I shall further describe later). This was how the new story of changing the regime "by royal granting" was constructed.

The dramatic lighting evident in Fig. 6 and Fig. 7, as well as the panoramic view seen in Fig. 8, highlight the dimensions of theatricality of the event through the visibility of the setting and further reveal the illusory quality of the entire ceremony. Within the frames is a space of projection; whereas the photographs capture an actual incident, that incident was a

phantasm or a masquerade in the first place. Hence, the significance of the ceremony was profound yet illusory, owing to its fictional origin.

These photographs not only serve to underline the theatrical aspect of the event, but also function as a means of distribution to the public spectator. Since the People's Party government provided the photographs of the ceremony to the press media, they mediated the representation of the ceremony, enabling the public, who were not actually present, to see what they could not have seen inside the palace hall. It was through the distribution of photographs in the illustrated newspapers that the mass spectators were given a theatrical experience – that of perceiving the *official* changing of regime.

After the performative utterance had been performed, Mano, the committee, and the ministers took the *samutthai* of *ratthathammanun* back and placed it on the *phan waen fa* to present to the King again. At an auspicious moment, between 14.53 and 15.05 pm, the gong was struck. The King then granted the signed and sealed constitution to Chaophraya Phichaiyat (Dun Bunnag), the Speaker of the People's Representative Assembly. This part of the ceremony functioned as the finishing touches to constituting and consecrating the constitution by royal power. The musicians played music, the military honour guards saluted, the royal anthem was performed, a gun salute began and the bells and drums in every temple in the kingdom rang for 10 minutes (NAT: Prime Minister's Office: PO 0201.97.4/1).

Thus, the rite of inauguration of the new regime was not completed with the finishing touches of the King but with an act of public announcing. That is, the ritual ceremony fulfilled its function by making an impact on its intended audience (Seleo-Shanks, 2012). The arrangement with temples to ring the bells and beat the drums not only served that purpose but also revealed the significance of Buddhism in the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony. As a community centre, temples echoed the act of announcing the news from the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall at exactly at the same time to inform Thais all over the country that a new rule of law was announced. This planned effort suggested a form of centralisation of power where the centre instructed the provincial areas to perform an act of announcing and, at the same time, welcoming: a sign of acceptance. The majority of Thais who had no opportunity to witness the ceremony with their own eyes thus perceived it through their ears.

There was also an intention to broadcast the ceremony by means of documentary film. But since the film was lost, it is unknown how the ceremony was planned to be projected in mass media. Nevertheless, an article written in 1949 by Sanga Kanchanakkhaphan (Khun Wichitmattra), who was an official at the Ministry of Commerce,

an author, and the director of Siang Si Krung Film, provided information about the filming process and the atmosphere of the last rehearsal of the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony.[54]

Kanchanakkhaphan wrote that the government hired Siang Si Krung Film to produce a documentary film of the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony. He noted that the documentary would consist of other recorded scenes from the city of Bangkok but no further details were given of the final production. It was remarkable that no other media were given permission to enter the ceremony and that only Siang Si Krung Film was hired to produce the documentary, while official photographers took still photographs. As the writer recalled, the rehearsal went exactly as planned except for the royal costume. During the rehearsal, Prajadhipok was clothed in a green and purple garment, as the full royal attire would be reserved for the real ceremony. The details of light setting had been added because, according to the film director, the King had asked about the lighting system since the hall was fairly dark. His colleague, Luang Kol, the cameraman informed the King that three spotlights would be set on the ceiling to cast light to the curtain and six flashlights would be on the ground. The camera would be placed in the centre of the hall while the speaker would be near the curtain on the left.

Kanchanakkhaphan's observation on the King's manners was remarkable, 'I assumed that His Majesty was so blessed. He inquired to assure that everything would be nicely conducted. This implied that he was genuinely willing to grant the constitution to let the country be ruled under democracy' (Kanchanakkhaphan, 1998). Kanchanakkhaphan's account not only indicates the government's intention to use new media, such as documentary film, to propagate the new political system but also suggested that Prajadhipok and the People's Party, at that moment, were rather compromising. This was suggested by the fact that the King was in a good mood and paid extreme attention to the filming process.[55]

The latter part of the ceremony assured the public that the King had approved this new political system of constitutionalism. After the ritual had finished, Chaophraya Phichaiyat, together with other representatives carried the signed *ratthathammanun* on the

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[54] Siang Si Krung Film (also known as Si Krung Film) was founded in 1927 and operated until 1972. It was the only film company during the reign of Prajadhipok that produced film using a sound-on-film technique. The Vasuwat Brothers, the owners of *Si Krung* Newspaper, owned the company. Siang Si Krung produced both fictional and documentary films including a documentary of the Constitution Granting Ceremony. Unfortunately, their film of the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony has been lost.

[55] This observation corresponded with the fact that the King had been involved in the drafting of this constitution. See NAT: *Copy of the report of the 34th (extraordinary) session of the House of Representatives*, 16th November 1932, the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall.

phan waen fa to the Royal Plaza to the south of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall, whereas Prajadhipok appeared at the southern Sihabanchon, a window balcony for the King to give audience to foreign visitors. The same sequence was then repeated, the performance of music and the royal anthem followed by a salute from the military honour guards. At the end of the royal anthem, Phra Borirak Krisdika, a scrivener read the announcement of the royal constitutional granting. As the act of utterance was performed again, Chaophraya Phichaiyat raised *phan ratthathammanun* in his hands as a response. The King then returned to the palace as the music, the salute and the royal anthem were performed in his honour.

The King's body in this ceremony performed a constitutional justification. The presence of the King and *phan ratthathammanun* to the public eye, together with the granting speech performed by the scrivener, on behalf of the King, constructed a sort of legitimisation for the new political system and regime. The constitutional act of the constitution as the new rule of law of Thailand was thus complete at this stage, as the public had witnessed the 'come-into-being' process through the King's act of approval and granting, as well as the performative utterance made on behalf of the King by the scrivener.

While the event at the Royal Plaza could have been the perfect scenario for propaganda, in fact it was the two photographs of the King signing and granting the constitution that became iconic and were widely distributed by the press media. Through the photographs in the news reports, the meaning of the ritual was transferred beyond the moment of performance. One scholar of medieval performance, Jenna Soleo-Shanks, noted that although two-dimensional representations of ritual performances could not fully replicate the entire relationship between the stage events and the urban space, they at least allowed viewers to see ritual performances in their intended setting and to form some connection with the sacred story in its political context (2012: 219-91).[56] The photographs thus transcended the division between the elites and commoners, bringing the ritual out of the sacred and into the civic space. The close-up photographs of the King offered a re-position to the viewer who was not capable of being there in reality; they took the viewers to an imaginary position close to the King's body, yet the angle suggested the position of the viewer was lower than His Majesty. This viewing position corresponded with the position of

[56] Jenna Soleo-Shanks's *From Stage to Page: Sienna's Caleffo Dell'Assunta, Spectacular Machines, and the Promotion of Civic Power* elaborated how images of ritual performance, in her case, the *caleffo dell'Assunta* in Sienna, functioned as a means to reinforce civic identity. See Soleo-Shanks, Jenna (2012) 'From Stage to Page: Sienna's Caleffo Dell'Assunta, Spectacular Machines, and the Promotion of Civic Power' in Gertsman, Elina and Stevenson, Jill (eds.) *Thresholds of Medieval Visual Culture: Liminal Spaces*, Woodbridge: Boydell, p. 281-301.

those who were in the actual ceremony including the people's representatives. The frames of the images reveal the position of the camera to be at the same level as other ordinary people.

In this circumstance, the photograph did not serve as mere record but as a form of media propaganda for the new regime. By transferring the King's acts from the field of ritual in the private sphere to the field of gaze in the public sphere, these photographic images turned out to be a means of persuasion. The captured gestures became a visual language delivering a particular message to the public, that the King had approved and granted them with the constitution. By being signed and granted by the King, the constitution was imposed the right to be, to be constituted as the new constitution and to be legitimised for promulgation as the new rule of law of the country. The photographs that captured these acts re-constituted them and consequently functioned as a means to establish this new constitution in the public consciousness. They became propaganda images, attempting to advocate for this new imported ideology.

Guy Debord's critique of spectacle (1995), which concerns mainly how modern capitalism operates as a form of social control and domination through the production and accumulation of images in mass communication, fits well with an analysis of the distribution of the photographs of Prajadhipok. The spectacle, understood in its most limited sense as mass media, functioned as a reinforcement of the power of the ruling discourse (19). The image's capacity for propaganda thus encouraged the circulation of the photographs through newspapers. *Thai Kasem* newspaper, for instance, published on 17th December 1932 (Fig. 11) reported on the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony and featured the photographs of Prajadhipok's signing and granting constitution (17th December 1932: 9, 12-14). The two photographs were the best shots of the most important moments of the ceremony and their widespread use suggests that there was substantial control over the images to be displayed and distributed. The purpose of having the event photographed was thus not only to record the event but also to regulate the images to be consumed by the public. As previously stated, the press was not allowed to enter the palace to record the ceremony, and thus what the public saw through the media was purely the official photographs selected and distributed by the government. In the absence of the documentary film produced by Siang Si Krung Film, these photographs were the key form of media propaganda that played a significant role in the legitimising discourse promoting the public reception of the new regime. The widespread distribution of these photographs concentrated on communicating that the constitution was lawful and presenting the new regime in a positive light.

Thai Kasem is a perfect example of propaganda conducted through the media. The report reveals that it was closely tied with the government's campaigning. Not only because it presented the official photographs from the government but its content was also copied from the official schedule with additional details and further description on the celebration at Sanam Luang (an open field used in royal cremations, official ceremonies and public activities). There was no opinion provided on the event. Furthermore, it published the government's words of gratitude towards Prajadhipok's granting the constitution and honoured him for his love for the country and its citizens. The People's Party effectively used the press media to control and shape public opinion. Mass communication like newspapers then served as public relations,[57] delivering particular selected messages from the government to the public, specifically: the King had granted the constitution of the new political system and conceded his kingly powers in administration to the Thai populace through the commoner's government. In this circumstance, Prajadhipok became the first Thai constitutional king and by having the two images accompanying the text, what was published in the newspaper became another form of visual evidence or proof. Through the illustrated newspapers, the first constitution and the new regime became fully legitimised.

Criticising the view that a photograph is an emanation and evidence of a past reality (Barthes, 1981: 88), John Tagg (1988: 3) argued that the real meaning of photographs did not inflect from some prior reality but was rather produced by specific forces and contexts and purposes.[58] Yet, the photographs of Prajadhipok indicate that the production of meaning of a photograph, in accord with Tagg's argument, could also simultaneously relate to an actual past event. However, the use of the photographs of Prajadhipok in the illustrated newspapers determined its meaning (Sontag, 1977: 106) as images of legitimisation by enabling the public audience, the members of the national community, who had no chance to take part in

[57] The role of press media in politics was discussed in depth in Jamieson, Kathleen Hall and Waldman, Paul (2004) *The Press Effect: Politicians, Journalists, and the Stories that Shape the Political World*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press. Interested parties, particularly politicians, tended to assert their influences on framing news report because they are aware that a frame or underlying structure of news report is capable of shaping public opinion. See Tuchman, Gaye (1978) *Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality*, New York: Free Press; Chomsky, Noam and Herman, Edward S. (1994) *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, London: Vintage and Gandy, Oscar H., Jr. and Grants, August (eds.) (2001) *Framing Public Life*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

[58] While Roland Barthes's *Camera Lucida* (1981) is one of the most important early works on photography and remains influential today, it has been criticised by many scholars. Barthes, Roland (1981) *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. For reflections on and critiques of *Camera Lucida*, see for example Starenko, Michael (1981) 'Roland Barthes: The Heresy of Sentiment' *Afterimage*, 9 (November), pp. 6-7; Tagg, John (1988) *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories*, Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press and Batchen, Geoffrey (2011) *Photography Degree Zero: Reflections on Roland Barthes' Camera Lucida*, Cambridge, Mass.; London: MIT Press.

the actual ceremony, to see what they did not perceive in reality. Here, Michael Hatt's discussion of the photographic souvenir provides an explanation for the manner in which the photographs of 10th December ceremony acted on the viewer. Hatt (1999: 83) stated that for the viewer, the photograph not only reminds them of the past act but also allows them to participate in that act; it functions as "a means of inclusion" that imaginatively brings the public spectator to the ritual space. Hatt's argument may be useful in understanding the role of photographs in illustrated newspapers as a means of generating public witness.[59] In the case of the Thai constitution, this aspect was emphasised through another photograph, which provided a panoramic view of the King giving audience at the southern Sihabanchon of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall (Fig. 12). The Thai citizen, a notion introduced by the new regime, was included in this significant political ceremony for the beginning of a new phase of the country which concentrated on public participation in administration.

At this point, during the moment of the constitutionalisation of the constitution, the spectators were re-embodied through the newspaper photographs and re-constituted as citizens of the new constitutional regime. The body of the spectator then became a liminal site of action and reaction through which the creation and reinforcement of identity and power took place (Gertsman and Stevenson, 2012). Although they were not involved in the process of granting, they were, for the first time, acknowledged in the direction the country was going and, through their representatives, were capable of having a voice.

Visual images reproduced and circulated in the media thus served not only as propaganda, a sufficient proof or documented evidence informing and persuading about the legitimacy of the new regime, but also as a means of inclusion — an acknowledgement of the ritual of changing regimes. In this sense, the replication of the photographs in the illustrated press and their distribution to the masses helped establish the new constitutionalist regime in the public consciousness. Thus, in the beginning of the new regime, the images printed in the newspapers had a specific social function in continuing the ritual of constituting the constitution from the palace to the entire country. Newspapers were thus a powerful agent and in this circumstance the technological reproducibility did not eliminate

[59] For further reading on the relationship between photography, journalism and propaganda, see Hurndall, Christopher (1996) *The Weimar Insanity: Photographs and Propaganda from the Nazi Era*, Lewes: Book Gild and Connelly, Mark and Welch, David (eds.) (2005) *War and the Media: Reportage and Propaganda 1900-2003*, London: I. B. Tauris. On the issue of propaganda in general, see for example Cull, Nicholas J., Culbert, David and Welch, David (2003) *Propaganda and Mass Persuasion: A Historical Encyclopaedia, 1500 to the Present*, Santa Barbara CA: ABC-Clio; Jowett, Garth and O'Donnell, Victoria (2006) *Propaganda and Persuasion*, Thousand Oaks, Calif.; London: Sage and Welch, David (2013) *Propaganda: Power and Persuasion*, London: British Library.

the aura of the object reproduced, as Walter Benjamin had claimed. For Benjamin, the decline of the aura of an object occurred in the mechanical reproduction once the modern, capitalist society emancipated it from traditional and ritual contexts (Benjamin, 1992).[60] However, the reproduction of photographs of 10th December ceremony actually constituted and solidified the event, making it accessible and visible in the minds of the mass of recipients across the country.

The photographs, then, acted as the act of spectatorship. The performativity of looking generated an acknowledgement of the new constitution among the Thais, as they witnessed and participated in the ceremony through photography. The spectators encountered the King's body and more importantly his actions, whereas the bodies of the spectators themselves were physically away from the ceremony, both in terms of time and space as the photographs were a "record" of an event. In their performance of looking, the spectators were confronting the past. Photographs, as a technological invention, make the past present by being gazed at; the spectators were constituted by the presence of the past event recorded in the photographs. By looking at the photographs of the constitution ceremony of the first constitution, the Thai spectator acquired their new status as a citizen — everyone was equal — under the new constitutional regime. The constitution of the new Thai-self therefore took place within a visual field.[61] By eliminating the distance between people of different classes and the physical distance between the inside and outside of the palace hall, printed media, like newspapers, did not make the ritual ceremony profane. On the contrary, they maintained and expanded the sacredness to the mass beholder.

The royal granting held at the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall, whether it was the result of reconciliation, compromise or tension between the old and the new power, had become an official discourse concerning the constitution of the new regime. The photographs capturing that moment had established and promoted the new regime to the public. However, they were not merely photo-reportage of the ceremonial event but instead were intended to symbolise the monarchical power in constituting the first constitution: the images portrayed the giving of life to *ratthathammanun*, the supreme law of the new political system.

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[60] Benjamin's optimistic view on the decline of aura as a transformation of art to an object engaged with politics and revolutionary sensitivity was also challenged by contemporary scholar Theodor Adorno who argued that the reduction of aura in such way only led art to fetishism in the consumer industry. For more information on these debates, see Adorno, Theodor and Benjamin, Walter (2001) *The Complete Correspondence, 1928-1940*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

[61] See an elaboration on the theatricality and gazing in Lacan, Jacques (1977) *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, trans. Alan Sheridan, New York: Norton.

The People's Party revolution on 24th June 1932 and the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony on 10th December 1932 show that the beginning and the end of the absolutist regime in Siam can be conceptualised within the landscape of the Royal Plaza. These incidents mark the moments of shift in Thailand's political history as the identity of this landscape and royal artefacts were challenged, re-defined and re-claimed. Yet the Royal Plaza and the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall were not simply the backdrop of the 1932 Revolution but a target of defiance, since they are representational bodies and/or an anthromophisation of the monarch. However, this identity of these royal legacies transformed their role into an active one, as their last breaths gave birth to the first constitution of the new power: the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall as a grand ceremonial theatre of the promulgation of the constitution and the Royal Plaza as a place for the public spectacle of that constitution. The inside and outside of the throne hall played a significant role in the beginnings of the new regime: first on the day of revolution and second, on the granting of the constitution day. As a site for the rite of passage, or a site of passage, the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall passed through a transformational operation itself; the throne hall did not die with the absolute regime but remained the national-political theatre by acquiring new political life as the National Assembly.[62]

Shortly after the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony, the King and the People's Party turned against each other. Following the defeat of the royalist Boworadet Rebellion in October 1933, the new meaning of the image of *phan ratthathammanun* was employed against the monarchy and became a powerful symbol of the new constitutionalist regime. The next chapter discusses the transformation of the image of *phan ratthathammanun* from an object of reverence associated with the King into an object that was used to denigrate the monarchy and, more importantly, into the supreme law of the nation, which was worth dying for. The image of *phan ratthathammanun* became an essential element of the temporary crematory that the People's Party built for cremating the soldiers and policemen, who died in the battle of the Boworadet Rebellion and consequently at the Constitution Defence Monument built to commemorate the incident in Lak Si.

[62] The transformation of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall as a centre of constitutionalist administration did not last for long. Following the end of the People's Party regime in 1947, the new National Assembly, after several postponements, was built in 1970 and unveiled in 1974.

Chapter 2

Sacrificing for Constitutionalism: The Image of the Constitution in the Commemoration of the Boworadet Rebellion

The Boworadet Rebellion in 1933 brought brutality into the heart of Thailand's politics. It was the country's first civil war, which occurred because of the clash between the old and the new elites, the royalists and the revolutionaries.[63] It was followed by a proliferation of commemorative practices focusing on the commoners who sacrificed their lives for the country. As an invented tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983), the construction of the Boworadet war memorial and commemoration events were key elements in legitimising the subsequent authority, and unifying the citizens, of the new revolutionary nation state. These efforts represent a work of memory that attempted to shape and control the Thai people's perception of the incident.

While Maurice Halbwachs (1992) remarked that collective memory is group memory of individuals constructed within social structures and institutions, Jan Assmann (1995) put this forward by introducing the concept of "cultural memory": an objectified and institutionalised memory that appeared in the form of symbols such as texts, images, rituals, landmarks and monuments. The collective-cultural memory is a tool as well as an object of power (Nora, 1996) and therefore can be used by institutions in power to support and energise an emerging nation-state.[64] As such, the commemorative practices of the Boworadet

[63] The Palace Revolt of 1912 was the first commoner's revolt against the House of Chakri. This uprising failed but King Vajiravudh, brother of Prajadhipok pardoned or lessened the sentences for most of the coup plotters. See Numnonda, Thamsook (1979) *Yangtoek Run Raek: Kabot Ro. So.130* [The first generation of the Young Turks: The Palace Revolt of 1912], Bangkok: Ruangsin and Kamutphitsamai, Atcharapon (1997) *Kabot Ro. So. 130 kabot phuea prachathippatai: Naeo khit thahan mai* [The Palace Revolt of 1912, the revolt for democracy: The concept of the new soldier], Bangkok: Amarin. Two Plotters, Rian Srijan and Net Phunwiwat wrote that Pridi Banomyong told them, for the People's Party, the Revolution of 1932 was a mission continued from the Palace Revolt of 1912. See Sijan, Rian and Phunwiwat, Net (1976) *Kabot Ro. So. 130: Kan patiwat krung raek khong Thai* [The Palace Revolt of 1912: The first revolt in Thailand], 5th edition, Bangkok: Khamphi.

[64] In 1950, the French philosopher and sociologist Maurice Halbwachs introduced the concept of "collective memory" to explain a construction of individual's memory as part of the group situated in the society, see Halbwachs, Maurice (1992) *On Collective Memory*, trans. and written introduction by Lewis A. Coser, Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press. In the late 1980s, the German scholar of cultural memory Jan Assmann developed this concept further as "cultural memory" to explain the way in which memory is conveyed and sustained in the society through cultural formation and institutional communication, see Assmann, Jan and Czaplicka, John (1995) 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity' *New German Critique*, No. 65, Cultural History/Cultural Studies (Spring-Summer), pp. 125-133. The rise of memory studies that began in 1970s led the study of memory grow in various directions including history, historiography, art history, cultural studies, visual culture and war studies. See for example Yates, Frances Amelia (1969) *The Art of Memory*, Harmondsworth: Penguin; Connerton, Paul (1989) *How Societies Remember*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Nora, Pierre (1999-2010) *Rethinking France: Les Lieux de mémoire*, Vol. 1-4, Chicago; London: Chicago University Press; Bal, Mieke, Crewe, Jonathan and Spitzer, Leo (eds.) (1999) *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present*, Hannover, NH: London: Dartmouth College.

Rebellion not only show the way that the People's Party shaped the social remembrance of the incident (Connerton, 1989), but also how they sought to evoke a sense of patriotism and sacrifice among the citizens in the name of love for the nation (Anderson, 1983), binding together members of the national community. On the one hand, the commemoration justified the war that the state had asked its citizen to fight for (Mosse, 1990: 7) and, on the other hand, it offered consolation for individual's grief by serving as a form of reparation for the loss of life experienced in the war (Ashplant *et al*., 2000; Winter, 1995). The search for an appropriate language of loss to the centre of political and cultural life is essential in such circumstances (Cannadine in Whaley, 1982). In the aftermath of the Boworadet Rebellion this search involved the making of a new meaning of what it was to be a good citizen and national sacrifice.

This chapter considers the nationalisation of death as manifested in the commemorative visual forms of the funeral processions of the 17 soldiers and policemen who died in fighting the rebellion. The crematorium at Sanam Luang and the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument in Lak Si District express the manner in which democratisation has led to the recognition of dead common soldiers as a matter of public interest (Inglis, 1993: 9) and created a new status for them as equals of the royal elite. The use of Sanam Luang, the royal cremation field, as the cremation ground and the erection of the monument will be considered as examples of the appropriation of spaces and royal culture employed to promote constitutionalist propaganda. These places and practice, considered as the "sites of memory" — *lieux de mémoire* — the practice and objects in which 'memory crystalised and secretes itself' (Nora, 1989: 7), will be explored in relation to Stuart Hall's notion of culture as the 'critical site of social action and intervention, when power relations are both established and potentially unsettled' (Procter, 2004: 2).

Constitutionalism had some immediate effects on the visual culture of the post-Boworadet Rebellion. The revolutionary's nationalism moved the centre of the nation from the King to the people and thereby elevated the status of the commoner, constituting them into a new kind of subjectivity as a citizen, instead of a subject of the King. This chapter also explores the transformation of *phan ratthathammanun*; the constitution — *ratthathammanun* — that was changed from an object of reverence associated with the King to the opposite extreme, becoming the supreme law of the nation and something worth dying for even if it meant fighting against royalty. Central to the argument is that the visual culture of the Boworadet war commemoration constituted the People's Party's new humanitarian concept of equality, which undermined the pre-existing hierarchical order fundamental to the

absolutist regime. The argument is presented that love and worship of the constitution was vital for the creation of a specific form of reward for veterans, as well as a means of commemoration of the fallen. The performative power of the image of *phan ratthathammanun,* which appeared on the Safeguarding the Constitution Medal (Phithak Ratthathammanun Medal) (Fig. 13), the crematorium for the soldiers and policemen who died in the battle with the rebellion (Fig. 14) and the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument (Anusaowari Phithak Ratthathammanun) (Fig. 15) will be discussed in relation to the crafting of a new identity and an ideal type of Thai citizen.

Judith Butler's concept of performativity[65] that explains identity as constituted by and within discourses (1997) offers a refreshing perspective in approaching the People's Party's attempts to constitute a new kind of identity for the Thai people. Whereas the first chapter discusses the performativities of the People's Party and Prajadhipok in the transition of the regime in 1932, this chapter takes commemorative practices and architecture as performative agents that crucially perform constitutional acts for the new political identity of Thais as citizens. Butler's formation of identity and subjectivity as performative, that 'the subject is the result of its deeds rather than the initiator of them' (Butler and Salih, 2004: 6) is helpful in shifting perceptions of visual materiality from focusing on the representation of identity to a production of identity.[66] What follows is an examination of the political aspect and exercise of power of the crematorium, the funeral ceremony and the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument. They are understood not as *reflecting* the revolutionary's constitutionalism but *constituting* its meaning. As part of a political operation, they serve as strategic agencies, the sites through which the constitutional state and citizenship took place.[67]

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[65] Butler's theory of performativity has been central to the debates around identity politics and expanded from the discussion of gender, racial and other forms of identity politics to other disciplines including art history and visual culture. It provides a new way of interpreting the practices in visual culture as performative; which means that artistic meaning is no longer unitary and pre-prescribed but instead becomes open for interpretative engagement. See for example, Jones, Amelia and Stephenson, Andrew (eds.) (1999) *Ibid.*

[66] Despite its widespread reception, Butler's theory of performativity has been criticised, particularly on her negation of agency, by many left-wing thinkers and feminists. For the critiques of Butler and her responses, see Benhabib, Seyla *et al*. (1995) *Feminist Contentions: A Philosophical Exchange*, New York; London: Routledge. This thesis employs Butler's performativity to analyse the People's Party's commemoration but does not separate the doer from the doing.

[67] Some limits to this study are due to an insufficiency in the existing literature of sources that may provide contemporary perspectives or the direct experience of veterans. Apart from *San Somdet* (The Princes' Messages), a record of the correspondence between Prince Naris and Prince Damrong and a short story *La Kon Ratthathammanun* (Goodbye the constitution) by Si Burapha (Kulap Saipradit), which will be discussed later in the chapter, the only historical accounts of the Boworadet War commemoration are the official records and accounts by the media, which mainly reported on the events without any criticism. Hence, as this study relies heavily on these official sources, it focuses primarily on addressing the issue of nationalism in relation to the patriotism that the revolutionary government attempted to impose on the Thai people.

The Boworadet Rebellion: The Failed Royalist Coup

On 15th March 1933, three months after Prajadhipok inaugurated the first Thai constitution, Pridi Banomyong, the Minister of State, submitted a radical economic reform, the "Draft National Economic Plan"- known as the "Yellow Cover Dossier" to the National Assembly. The Yellow Cover Dossier proposed the nationalisation of all land and the conversion of all Thais to state employees. It ignited a conflict between the new government and royal members and aristocrats. Prajadhipok harshly criticised this re-arrangement of state-welfare in a document called the "White Cover Dossier", contending that Banomyong's economic plan was exactly the same as that followed in Russia, commenting 'I don't know who copied who: Stalin copied Luang Pradit [Banomyong] or Luang Pradit copied Stalin' (Chaiching, 2013: 249). Subsequently, Banomyong's plan divided the Cabinet, and on 1st April, the Prime Minister Phraya Manopakorn Nititada dissolved the National Assembly and resorted to emergency decrees. The Anti-Communist Act was declared on 2nd April and Banomyong was exiled to France but returned to Thailand after Phahon staged a coup on 20th June. The new government under Phahon then declared that Banomyong was innocent.

The Yellow Cover Dossier conflict was the origin of the fear of communism in relation to republicanism among Thai elites (Jeemtheerasakul, 2010). On 11th October 1933, Prince Boworadet, a German-educated minor member of the royal family and the Minister of Defence of the previous absolutist regime, led royalist forces from the Eastern Region of the country, consisting of the Nakhon Ratchasima, Phetchaburi and Udon Thani Regiments, together with a cavalry unit and several artillery batteries, to Bangkok. The rebels, calling themselves the National Rescue Council (Khana ku ban ku mueang), camped in Don Mueang, Bang Khen, and Lak Si. They sent a letter to the government demanding that they resign and accusing them of defaming the King and allowing Banomyong to come back to continue his communist plans. This was the first time that charges of lèse-majesté[68] and communism were used as weapons to destroy a political opponent, tactics that continue to be used to this day (Kasetsiri, 2008: 157). The government refused to comply with their demands and consequently, Luang Phibunsongkhram (later Field Marshal Plaek Pibunsongkhram, hereinafter, Phibun) was appointed to lead the government's forces in the

[68] Lèse-majesté, or Article 112 in the Thai Criminal Code, was created in 1908 and remained unchanged to the present day. It states that, "Whoever defames, insults or threatens the king, queen, heir-apparent, or regent shall be punished with imprisonment of three to fifteen years." The untouchable status of the Thai king is also secured by all versions of the Thai constitutions since 1932, which states: "The king shall be enthroned in a position of revered worship and shall not be violated. No person shall expose the king to any sort of accusation or action."

capital.

The battle ended with the victory of the government's forces; Boworadet's second-in-command, Colonel Si Sitthi Songkram, died in clashes on 23rd October and Prince Boworadet and his wife subsequently fled to Vietnam (then part of French Indochina). The remnants of the uprising were dispersed and the rebellion ended by 26th October. The government held a special court for the trial of the surviving rebels where many of them were sentenced to Tarutao Island in the South. Although there was no concrete evidence that Prajadhipok had supported the rebellion, the People's Party suspected his involvement.[69] The King also lacked trust in the government because his prestige and power had been greatly diminished by their actions. As such, Prajadhipok left the country for England in January 1934 and eventually abdicated his rule in March the following year. From the bloodless revolution of 1932 to the bloody rebellion of 1933, the latter marked the real fall of the absolutist regime.

The Safeguarding the Constitution Medal

To reward the veterans of the Boworadet war, Prajadhipok, with the advice and consent of the National Assembly, enacted the Act of the Safeguarding the Constitution Medal B.E. 2476 (Ratchakitchanubeksa, Vol. 50, 9th December 1933: 806-808) in December 1933. This Safeguarding the Constitution Medal (Phithak Ratthathammanun Medal) (Fig. 13), which was awarded to those who were in national service during the suppression of the rebellion, was the first object to bear an image of *phan ratthathammanun* in an anti-royalist context. The presence of the image of *phan ratthathammanun* clearly demonstrates how the symbols of the pre-war period could still be applicable as a post-war symbol (Winter, 1995), yet it also appeared to offer a break, or an interruption, in the meaning attached to the symbol from the pre-war tradition (Fussell, 1975; Eksteins, 1989). This highlights the state of flux of the meaning of national symbols, contingent as they are on political hegemony.

Designed by the Fine Art Department, the 23-millimetre blackened copper square medal is adorned with the image of *phan ratthathammanun* surrounded by *chaiyapruek* or a pink shower wreath (the symbol of victory) and rays. The reverse shows the image of Phra Syama Devadhiraj, an integration of the Buddha and a divine monarchical image that acts as the national guardian deity. The deity, who was invented by Mongkut in the 19th century,

[69] For further elaboration on Prajadhipok's involvement with the Boworadet Rebellion, see the first chapter of Chaiching, Nattapoll (2013).

appears in monarchical attire carrying a sword in his right hand while his left hand is raised to chest level in the posture of execution. Despite this being a monarchical image, Phra Syama Devadhiraj floats above the inscription "Suppression of the Rebellion B.E. 2476", suggesting that he was on the opposing side during the royalist uprising. The adoption of Phra Syama Devadhiraj on the medal thus indicates that the transfer of power of the old institution to the constitutionalist regime had occurred in spiritual terms. Hence, the pre-modern, spiritual beliefs about Phra Syama Devadhiraj was appropriated as a means to promote progress which, in turn, undermined the institution that had invented it, just as the image of *phan ratthathammanun*, became an anti-royalist symbol despite its origins in the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony. As Samuel Hynes (1992) has argued, both continuity and innovation play an important role in creating representational forms of commemoration. Thus, the adoption of pre-existing forms may not necessarily result in it inheriting precisely the same interpretation as the original but rather it may possess different, or even conflicting, connotations.

A soldier, policeman or scout could wear the Safeguarding the Constitution Medal on any occasion with a uniform, and a civilian or official in civilian dress could wear the medal on all official occasions, state ceremonies and during other appropriate occasions. The suspension ring contained the inscription "Safeguarding the Constitution" (phithak ratthathammanun) and a 28-millimetre-wide national flag ribbon connected to the blackened copper top bar was inscribed with the message, "Sacrifice for the Nation" (salachip phuea chat). The presence of the national flag ribbon[70] signifies the unification of constitutionalism and the nation; it connects the message of "Sacrifice for the Nation" (salachip phuea chat) on the top bar with "Safeguarding the Constitution" (phithak ratthathammanun) on the suspension ring, denoting that constitutionalism is the supreme national ideology one would sacrifice their life for. Thus, the medal is both a symbol of honour and a political statement that transforms the wearer into a national patriot. The image of *phan ratthathammanun*, which conceptualises the constitutionalist ideology in a visual form, is attached to the left side of the chest of the wearer, over the heart and therefore signifies the wholehearted dedication that one has for the country. Thus, by wearing the constitutionalist symbol, the wearer could identify themselves as nationalists, willing to dedicate their lives to the revolutionary ground and the new moral-political value in the post-1932 society.

[70] The three colours of the Thai national flag represent the nation with the red colour, religion with the white colour and the monarchy with the blue colour. The blue colour on the national flag ribbon thus indicates that the monarchy, although powerless, still retains a position in the discourse of nationalism.

Whereas the survivors of the rebellion were awarded with the Safeguarding the Constitution Medal, those who died in the battle received their honour through commemorative practices such as the national cremation and the place in the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument. Their ashes were enshrined inside the monument. The significance of maintaining the memory of the war and the commemoration of the fallen commoner was also engaged with providing instructions of good citizenship; it taught the living how to die as patriots evoking the sacrifice that may be required from the citizen as the cost of being part of the nation (Anderson, 1983: 9). The image of *phan ratthathammanun* was essential for the death rituals of political martyrs as it served as a visual sign of the national-political ideology that the dead had sacrificed their lives defending. Thus, it appeared as an element in the crematorium that the revolutionary government built for the 17 soldiers and policemen who died in the battle[71] and, consequently, at the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument that enshrines the ashes of these fallen individuals.

The Space of Equality: The Grand Cremation and the Crematorium for the Fallen Commoner at Sanam Luang

After the end of the Boworadet Rebellion, the People's Party's government regulated the acceptable practices of cremating and mourning for the dead of the two opposing forces by creating a dichotomy between a "good death" and a "bad death". Since those who sacrificed their lives for the country held a special place as a poignant symbol of revolutionary faith (Mosse, 1990: 36-37), the 17 fallen soldiers and policemen of the government troops would thus receive the Grand Cremation as an honorary ceremony. In contrast, the corpses of the rebellion forces would not be returned to their families nor would they receive any magnificent funeral ceremonies (NAT: Prime Minister's Office, PO 0201.26/6: 35).[72]

[71] The official announcement reported the number of the dead from the government's forces as 17 but it is unlikely to be the real number due to the catastrophic nature of the civil war. It is also noteworthy that the number of dead soldiers from the Boworadet side was never announced.

[72] Nevertheless, the corpses of the soldiers from Nakhon Ratchasima, an important political centre and military base of the northern region, which became the headquarters of the rebellion, received official cremations in November 1933 as the government explained that these soldiers were only "misled" by the rebellion (NAT: Prime Minister's Office: PO 0201.26/5). The local people were also excused for being rebellious along the same lines. The cremation in Nakhon Ratchasima was thus seemingly part of the government's strategy to re-unite with the people of the military province. It was followed by the erection of the Thao Suranari Monument in January 1934 as a symbol of Nakhon Ratchasima's loyalty to Bangkok. Thao Suranaree or Lady Mo (also known as Ya Mo or Grandma Mo) was the wife of the governor of Nakhon Ratchasima who led the people in battle with the Laotian King Anouvong in the reign of King Nangklao (King Rama III, r. 1824-1851). The

The Grand Cremation on 18th February 1934 was also the first public funeral of the commoner (Prakitnonthakan, 2009). To understand and measure the influence of the space in the national memory, it is essential to consider Sanam Luang as *lieu de mémoire*, a site of memory by which power has been made to transform into a symbolic element of a community's memorial heritage (Nora, 1996). Sanam Luang, formerly known as "Thung Phra Men" (Phra Men Ground), is an open field of about 30 acres which had functioned as the royal cremation ground since the reign of King Buddha Yodfa Chulaloke (King Rama I, r. 1782-1809), the first King of the Chakri Dynasty. The name was changed to "Thong Sanam Luang" in 1855 during the reign of King Mongkut and subsequently became shortened to "Sanam Luang". Regarding its geographical location, Sanam Luang is in the area known as "Rattanakosin Island" in the Phra Nakhon District of Bangkok, a fortified city with several gates, consisting of the Grand Palace, the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, Bangkok's City Pillar Shrine and Sanam Luang.

Before the 1932 Revolution, funerary practices for commoners were forbidden throughout the entire area of Rattanakosin Island. The body of any commoner who died within the area was thus transported out through the Pratu Phi (Ghost's Gate) for cremation at the Saket Temple, outside the city walls (Prakitnonthakan, 2009). It is notable here that such a power to zone and regulate the use of space 'represents the architecture of social class' (Zukin, 1991: 16) by institutions of power. Landscape is thus not only a physical surrounding but also 'an ensemble of material and social practices and their symbolic representation' (Ibid). As an area of royal residency, the residential differentiation that operated in Rattanakosin Island thus reflected and reproduced established social relations and the Thai socio-cultural codes of practice based on class (Harvey, 1989: 118). Landscape and power were tightly interwoven in Sanam Luang, as it defined the royal territory and as a sacred space, the symbolic value of the landscape functioned to establish segregation based on the existing social hierarchy. The restricted area of Sanam Luang is thus a clear indication of social inequality since it maintained the Thai hierarchical order by preventing commoners from using the space.

Revolution often brings a sanctification of space as the space of sovereignty (Nora, 2006); in the Thai context, the revolutionaries' taking over of Sanam Luang expressed the way in which the new institutions of power were imposing their new meaning on this

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erection of the Thao Suranari Monument was thus a symbolic attempt to strengthen loyalty to the government in Bangkok by connecting the past event with the present. The Thao Suranari Monument was the first monument for commoners despite the fact that the woman it represents was from the elite class. For a fuller elaboration on the Thao Suranari Monument, see Kaeongamprasoet, Saiphin (1995) *Ibid*.

specific landscape, reclaiming and reshaping it to serve their new rule. This section considers the landscape of Sanam Luang as a site of contestation by which social negotiations have been produced (Gold and Revill, 2000: 11): a symbol of power and defence (Brunn *et al*., 2000: 68). Prime Minister Phahon's request to Prajadhipok for permission to use the northwestern corner of Sanam Luang, near the Veteran Monument of World War I[73] for the Grand Cremation of the fallen commoners created a profound change to the identity of landscape and the practices that related to it. The request to utilise Sanam Luang, which had been used as a site for the cremation of kings,[74] queens and high-ranking royalty (Fig. 16) as well as other royal ceremonies, demonstrates an attempt of the new regime to destroy the old one and turn this particular royal enclave into a new space for public use.[75] This act thus emphasises the triumph of the People's Party over the royalist forces on the very ground that once belonged to them. It also challenged the monarchy which was suspected of secretly supporting the rebellion (Prakitnonthakan, 2009: 78-79).

The commoner government's intervention in Sanam Luang consequently represents an act of contestation against the monarchy through the sabotage of its legitimacy on a spatial dimension. One result of this request was the creation of conflict between the government and the palace arising over the symbolic value and ownership of the landscape. Chaophraya Worapongpipat (Mom Rajawongse Yen Issarasena), the Head of the Ministry of the Royal Household (now the Bureau of the Royal Household) took the King's response to Phahon, informing him that His Majesty had suggested more appropriate locations such as Lumpini Park or Thung Phayathai. The royal-restricted landscape thus became a landscape of defence yet both concepts concerned a restriction on the involvement of participants on the landscape. The King's reaction towards the request for Sanam Luang to be employed for public use illustrates his attempts to protect and defend the landscape. Nevertheless, the

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[73] Although the Veteran Monument of World War I contained the ashes of the common soldiers who died in the war, the cremations were conducted in Europe.

[74] Prajadhipok is the only Chakri king who did not have a royal cremation at Sanam Luang since he died in England. His Queen, Rambhai Barni, was cremated here in 1986. The most recent royal cremation took place in 2012 for HRH Princess Bejaratana Rajasuda, the only daughter of King Vajiravudh.

[75] From this period on, Sanam Luang has been used on various occasions both for royalty and common people. Besides serving as a site for royal cremation, it was used as the cremation ground for those who died in the 14th October Incident in 1973 and has also been a home for the homeless, prostitutes, a flea market, and, most significantly, a site for political demonstration and where politicians may give speeches before an election. The Fine Arts Department designated Sanam Luang a National Historical Site in 1977. However, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration closed Sanam Luang for renovation in 2011. After the re-opening, the Bangkok Governor Mom Rajawongse Sukhumbhand Paribatra forbade any political activities, especially demonstrations, in order to reserve the space exclusively for royal ceremonies. See http://www.matichon.co.th/news_detail.php?newsid=1306472477&grpid=01&%20catid&subcatid, Accessed 27th November 2011.

government insisted and finally gained permission but the King, whose power had been gradually declining, told them to bear in mind that this was against his will (NAT: Prime Minister's Office: PO 0201.26/6: 51). Sanam Luang became a site of contestation, or an arena of conflict, in which the old power lost. The triumph of the government over Sanam Luang thus signified another break in the previous ideological stronghold in the post-Boworadet Rebellion period.

The rearrangement of Sanam Luang as a funeral ground for dead soldiers and policemen was the practical application of the People's Party's principle of equality. It erased the traditional social distinction of the dead and therefore advocated the equal rights of all Thai citizens under the constitutionalist regime. The cremation of commoners, as political martyrs who spent their lives defending the new political system, on the same funeral ground as the monarchy signifies a repudiation of the hierarchical segregation of Thai society. Symbolically, such an act constituted a new status for Thai people as the equal of the royal elites. The revolutionary spirit of equality was thus manifested in the Grand Cremation in Sanam Luang, marking that the new social equality in Thai society took place spatially.

Beside the appropriation of Sanam Luang as a field for honouring fallen commoners, the glorification of the heroism of their deaths was also manifested in an elaborate ritual that both constituted them as patriots and portrayed them as a didactic lesson for the living. Death thus became an opportunity to teach the public about political-civic virtues as it provided the opportunity for the lower class to be displayed as examples of virtue establishing them as national patriots.

The entire funeral ceremony, which consisted of a procession and a cremation, created an extravagant public spectacle, a theatrical public display that stimulated nationalistic feeling by revealing the dead as an example of how a good citizen may be rewarded for committing a noble sacrifice. As the fallen heroes, they deserve the honour of cremation with a royally ignited fire bestowed by the King in a place that would remain in the national memory.[76] The government also ordered displays of mourning: the army officers were urged to wear mourning clothes and all flags at military buildings were to be flown at half-mast from 26th November to 10th December (NAT: Prime Minister's Office, PO 0201.26/6: 25).

The following section discusses the precise process of the funeral ceremony and its performative role in constituting the fallen as national patriots. The complex ritual for fallen

[76] It is customary that those who died in services for the nation will be given the honour of cremation with a royal ignition of the fire bestowed by the King.

heroes began with a funeral procession with the military playing a significant role in organising the procession[77] to further promote the public's awareness of the military's role in defeating the rebellion.[78] The Ministry of Defence appointed Luang Narimitlekakan (Yuean Bunyasen),[79] a fine art lecturer (painting) at Cadet School (now Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy), an institution under the Army Training Command and the owner of "Hong Sinlapa" (art room- a shop that made and sold official uniforms) to design the decoration of the coffins and supervise the hearses in the funeral procession (Narimitlekakan, 1957). Vast crowds in Bangkok thus observed two funeral processions in which the bodies of the 17 fallen heroes were carried through the city. The first procession on 31st November 1933 travelled from the Infantry Battalion 7 in Phra Ram 9 and the Artillery Battalion 2 in Bang Sue to Rachathiwat Temple for the performance of the religious service. The second procession on 17th February 1934 was from Rachathiwat Temple to Sanam Luang for the Grand Cremation. Within the field of spectacle the acts of watching the procession of their dead fellows helped make the living recognise their roles as Thai citizens.

The newspaper *Prachachat* (29th November 1933: 1, 29-30) provides the details of the procession to Rachathiwat Temple. The deceased, in seventeen coffins decorated with national flags and wreaths, were transported on seventeen anti-aircraft halftracks. Other vehicles included one vehicle for monks leading the procession, five armoured cars and another vehicle at the end of the procession. The procession stopped at the Royal Plaza in front of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall for an honorary ceremony. After Mom Chao Wan Waithayakon (Prince Wan), a consultant of the government, gave a speech to honour the deceased, Prime Minister Phahon elevated their ranks and placed the rank insignias on their coffins. The ceremony ended with seventeen gun salutes and the national anthem

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[77] The funeral procession of the government troops in the Boworadet Rebellion was not the first military procession in Thailand. In particular in 1917, the Ministry of War, during the reign of Vajiravudh, staged a two-day military procession for the Siamese Expeditionary Force before they joined World War 1 in Europe. See Vella, Walter F. and Vella, Dorothy B. (1978) *Chaiyo!: King Vajiravudh and the Development of Thai Nationalism*, Honolulu: University Press of Hawai'i Press, p. 115.

[78] The long list of military interventions that followed the events of 1932 have resulted in many oscillations between military dominance and more democratic moments, although even the more democratic periods are not divorced from military influence.

[79] Luang Narimitlekakan (Yuean Bunyasen), the son of Luang Jenjityong (Sombun Bunyasen), a court artisan of the Fifth and Sixth Reigns, was a self-taught artist who learned Thai traditional arts and craft from observing his father and other court artisans working at "Hong Chang Khian" (the painter's room) in the Grand Palace. He continued his self-learning through foreign textbooks when he started working as a fine art lecturer at Cadet School in 1909. He served the military before the Revolution and continued to work until 1943 by teaching landscape drawing for military purposes and designing medals and uniforms for soldiers, policemen, custom officers and youth soldiers (yuwa chon thahan). His shop "Hong Sinlapa" on Fueangnakhon Road was also a meeting place for painters such as Hem Wechakon, Sawang Panyangam and Bunyung Sansomrot. See his biography in Narimitlekakan, Sirichai (1957) *The Cremation Book of Luang Narimitlekakan*, Bangkok: Thai Kasem.

performed by a military band. The procession then travelled further to Rachathiwat Temple where the coffins were rested for religious service and homage-paying until February 1934. Prajadhipok bestowed the royal offering and the white robe *bangsukun* (a robe dedicated to the dead) to a monk to perform religious services for the deceased. The King and Queen Rambhai Barni visited the temple on 11th January 1934, one day before departing to Europe and America (NAT: Prime Minister's Office, PO 0201.26/6: 38).

The procession from Rachathiwat Temple to Sanam Luang on 17th February was similar to the previous one but even more elegant and featured more military vehicles and cavalry. The streets were cleared while people stood to watch the procession and to pay their respects to the national heroes (Fig. 17, 18). Members of the government, representatives of the palace and the military attended the service but not the King and Queen as they had left the country.[80] The regent, Prince Naris, the King's relative and former member of the Supreme Council of the State of Siam (the council of senior princes who advised Prajadhipok before the revolution) served as the president of the ceremony. The following section discusses the Grand Cremation in Sanam Luang. It focuses on the crematorium as an architectural feature that generates the veneration of the death of the commoners, transforming them into political martyrs. The new aesthetic language, simplicity and the presence of *phan ratthathammanun* as an essential element in the crematorium emphasised the anti-royalist stance of the architecture.

As the temporary funeral architecture was erected on Sanam Luang (Fig. 14), the crematorium represented a modified form of *phra meru mat*, an ornate wooden structure for cremating deceased royalty (Fig. 16). Although Luang Narimitlekakan designed the crematorium (Ratchakitchanubeksa, 15th April 1934, Vol. 51: 179), he did not leave any writing concerning the ideas underlying the design of this construction. The correspondence between Prince Naris and his brother Prince Damrong is the only surviving document that describes both the physical appearance and the function of the crematorium. The two princes, both sons of Mongkut, were two of the most influential intellectuals of their time. They were not only members of the Supreme Council of State of Siam who were in custody at the time of the revolution but also experts on Thai art and culture.[81] Prince Naris was a court painter and an architect of the Fifth and Sixth Reigns who had designed many of the royal pyres and

[80] The royal couple ended their travels in England where the King later abdicated in 1935 and subsequently passed away from heart failure in 1941.
[81] After the revolution, Prince Naris remained in the government and became regent when Prajadhipok left for Europe and America but Prince Damrong was discharged from his position. He moved to Hua Hin and finally to Penang, Malaysia, after the Boworadet Rebellion.

temples including Rachathiwat Temple where the deceased received the religious service. Prince Damrong was the first Minister of the Interior and a founder of the modern education system, serving as the President of the Royal Council and the Director of the National Museum and the National Library, during the absolutist regime.

Prince Naris and Prince Damrong had no influence on the art institutions of the constitutional regime although the former still designed some *phra meru mat* for members of the minor royalty. Nevertheless, they remained keen observers of the contemporary scene and the two princes exchanged views on art, history, culture and contemporary matters via correspondence covering the period from 1914 to 1943.[82] This correspondence was eventually printed as 27 volumes entitled *San Somdet* (The Princes' Messages) and has become an invaluable source of information and knowledge on Thai art and culture.

In a letter dated 3rd February 1934, Prince Naris described the construction and physical appearance of the crematorium complex in Sanam Luang. According to the prince, the main building that functioned as the chamber for the cremation was a high-elevated floor structure with four *sang*s, which is a small building for monks to pray attached to the four corners of the chamber. The chamber was surrounded by a platform that was wide enough for people to carry the coffins to circumambulate anti-clockwise. The anti-clockwise circumambulation in the funeral is an act of commemoration and a symbol of the Buddhist three marks of existence that consist of impermanence, suffering and the non-self and/or the three realms of the world, heaven and hell. A small fence surrounded the three sides of the chamber except at the entrance on the west side (Narisara Nuvadtivongs, 1962: 107).

Prince Naris' description reveals that the crematorium appropriated the form of *phra meru mat* with *sang*. *Sang* is a symbol of the seven mountain-walls that surround Mount Meru, the sacred mountain that is a centre of the three universes[83] and a residence of Gods in Hindu and Buddhist cosmology. As Thai kings and other high-ranking royalty were regarded as the divine-on-earth, their dead bodies in a royal urn or casket were placed in a chamber under a multi-tiered pointed roof which served as a representation of Mount Meru, symbolising their return to heaven (Phirom, 1985). Thus, the presence of *sang* in the crematorium implies that the fallen commoners as national heroes were raised to equal heights as deceased royalty; that is they deserved a place in heaven too.

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[82] The two princes started writing to each other in 1914 but their correspondence was not consistent until 1932 after Prince Damrong moved to Hua Hin. The first correspondence after the revolution that was published in *San Somdet* was written by Prince Damrong on 2nd April 1933 as a new year greeting (Thailand changed the new year day from 1st April to 1st January in 1981). Nevertheless, the message suggests that there was prior correspondence as Prince Damrong referred to some discussion from a previous letter.

[83] The three universes include the physical, the metaphysical and the spiritual universe.

Even so, the most important concern of the Thai people in the post-1932 environment was not necessarily that of life after death in the mythological heaven of Mount Meru but in a more nationalistic sense of heaven, that is, forever living in the national memory. The farewell message of Somsak Denchai, the protagonist in the short story *La kon ratthathammanun* (Goodbye the constitution) to his wife expresses the speaker's dream that he, a young civilian who joined government troops to fight the royalist Boworadet Rebellion might be honoured and inscribed in the national memory through the state ceremony and public mourning:

> I am proud to die in this occasion. If they would bring my corpse to the Grand Cremation at Sanam Luang, along with those of other martyrs, and if people would mourn for those who sacrificed their lives for the peace of the nation and for defending *ratthathammanun*, I would die with happiness. And if your husband receives that honour and mourning from the fellow citizen, you should then restrain your feeling and leave him for the Thai nation. (Si Burapha, 1979: 12)

This message translates an individual's act into a collective act of national devotion which, therefore, makes him deserving of a form of national cremation as a national patriot. The message shows how an individual perceives the state-organised Grand Cremation as a means to soothe grief and turn it into dignity; as George L. Mosse stated, 'a feeling of pride was often mixed with mourning, a feeling of having taken part and sacrificed in a noble cause and thereby reserving them a special place in the national memory as a symbol of a revolutionary faith' (1990: 6, 36-7). Inspired by the real event, the backbone of the narrative in this short story is about dying for the constitution. Si Burapha (Kulap Saipradit), the Thai journalist, novelist and founder of the literary group, the Gentleman's Group (Khana suphap burut) wrote *La kon ratthathamamnun* and dedicated it to the 17 fallen heroes of the Boworadet Rebellion.[84] Benedict Anderson remarked that cultural products of nationalism such as poetry, prose, fiction, music and arts can express love, particularly self-sacrificial love, for the nation (Anderson, 1983: 141-142); *La kon ratthathammanun* is an example of such literature that serves as part of the proliferation of commemorative practices concerning commoners who would sacrifice their lives for the country.

[84] Two months after the Boworadet Rebellion, the Art and Craft Section in the Committee of Public Relations published a book *Thoet ratthathammanun* (Honouring the constitution) on the occasion of the Constitutional Fair of December 1933. *Ratthathammanun* is one of the short stories published in this publication. *Thoet ratthathammanun* provided knowledge of the constitution, the Act of Safeguarding and Securing of the Constitution, stories of famous persons from various occupations including lawyers, political scientists, scholars and some ministers, as well as essays about the constitution that were submitted to a competition. Buyers would also receive a colour picture of the constitution, printed from the winning entry of the painting competition as a gift. *Prachachat*, 4th December 1933: 3.

Prince Naris further stated that there were another two 'modern buildings like Sala Chaloem Krung' on the west and the north of the chamber (Narisara Nuvadtivongs, Ibid). Sala Chaloem Krung (literally, Pavilion of the City's Glory) (Fig. 19) was the Royal Theatre that Prajadhipok ordered to be constructed as a memorable gift to the Thai people on the occasion of the 150th Anniversary of the Rattanakosin era, under the ruling of the Chakri Monarch in 1932.[85] It was the only representation of modern architecture, with a flat roof and simple decoration which was built under Prajadhipok's command. Such a choice indicated features that distinguished the crematorium from *phra meru mat*: a flat roof and simple decoration. The main building or the chamber also had the same features. Prince Damrong's letter dated 25th February expressed his wonder of what to call this new funerary architecture (Narisara Nuvadtivongs, 1962: 132). The Prince wrote that there were three types of funerary building: *men* for the funerary pyre with a pointed roof, *rong thuem* for the flat-roof building that keeps the casket before a cremation and *param* for the flat-roof pavilion. *Phra meru mat* is the *men* type. Prince Damrong recalled that he had once ordered Phraya Ratchasongkram to build *param* for the cremation of Mom Chueay, a minor royal member, at Thepsirin Temple. The building had the same feature as *men* but with flat roof. Prince Naris replied on 3rd March that the crematorium of the 17 soldiers and policemen should be considered as *param* because of its flat roof (Narisara Nuvadtivongs, 1962: 143-144).

The discussion on the iconography of the funeral architecture between the two princes reveals that this new architectural invention of the People's Party's government had some trace of Prajadhipok's modern-style Royal Theatre. Thai elites, both of the new and the old regime, were motivated by the desire to be "modern" through Westernisation. Hence, the People's Party's modern architecture, identified by the simple architectural form, stemmed from the monarchy's modernisation project. The People's Party's modern crematorium for the 17 fallen heroes therefore benefited from royal initiations, both in terms of the traditional funeral pyre and the modern architecture. The result was a combination of two types of royalist legacy, the traditional and the modern. The government of the new regime did not however refuse entirely traditional aesthetics or the practices of the old regime but rather it selectively appropriated them to suit its demands.

The crematorium, with its flat roof and simple decoration became a prototype of the regime's new architecture as simplicity was promoted as a new aesthetic language. Chatri Prakitnonthakan, an architectural historian who was the pioneer of the study of the People's

[85] The celebration on the 150th Anniversary of the Rattanakosin era under the ruling of the Chakri Monarch took place on the Chakri Day, 6th April, two months before the People's Party's revolution on 24th June.

Party's art and architecture, claimed that the crematorium served as a prototype of the People's Party's architecture (Prakitnonthakan, 2009: 81). This new aesthetic quality, although first appearing in the royal-commanded Sala Chaloem Krung, is opposed to the aesthetic of ornamentation loaded with decoration as seen in traditional monarchy-related architecture, particularly *phra meru mat*. Regardless, as Sala Chaloem Krung was the only modern building built under the King's command, it cannot be strongly maintained that this style belonged to royalty since the monarchy's modernisation in art and architecture was mainly an appropriation of Western classical art.[86] It is worth noting however that the basic idea of Western modernity had already been initiated by the monarchy in the time of Mongkut. Since Prince Naris and Prince Damrong, the artists and scholars of the old regime, had no part in the design and construction of the crematorium, it is evident that the establishment of the new hegemonic aesthetic notions related to the dominant ideology of the society (Eagleton, 1990), which, in this case, had no interest in the royal aesthetic language.

Prakitnonthakan interpreted the presence of the flat roof and simple decoration in the crematorium of 1934 as an abolition of the hierarchical form in architecture.[87] The simplicity in this funerary architecture thus related to the concept of equality as it denied the class ideology manifested through the multi-tiered pointed roof and elaborate decoration. Whereas the crematorium emerged from the war between the old and the new authorities, it was essential to create a new aesthetic sensibility that was opposed to the old and establish a new set of standards for art and architectural practices. The modern architecture in the People's Party context therefore takes an anti-royalist stance and this gave form to the new humanitarian concepts of equality and citizen under constitutionalism. As for the crematorium, it constituted physically the new status to both the dead and those who came to pay respects to them. The simplicity in architectural form and the flat roof can therefore be seen as embodiments of the revolutionary spirit.

Prakitnonthakan further pointed out that the simplicity found in the People's Party's architecture was appropriated from European modern architecture which had become the international trend during the 1930s. According to Prakitnonthakan (2009: 12), the modern

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[86] For more details concerning the Thai royal court's collection of Western-style Thai paintings and sculptures and the commission of Western artists, see Poshyananda, Apinan (1994) *Ibid*. See also. Peleggi, Maurizio (2002a) *Ibid*.

[87] Prakitnonthakan also stated that *men* for the commoner did not exist before the People's Party regime; common people usually cremated their dead in a temple graveyard by placing a coffin on *choeng takon*, a pile of woods on which the coffin or body is placed and cremated. The People's Party government invented the modern crematorium as a hygienic measure since the traditional method of cremation causes the odour and ashes from the burning to disperse. The first permanent *men* for the commoner was made of concrete and located at Traimit Temple. Prakitnonthakan, Chatri (2009) *Ibid.*, p. 79.

architecture or "*sathapattayakam baep samai mai*" may be roughly characterised by the abandonment of traditional architectural forms, the glorification of humanitarianism, rationalism and the idea of modernisation and progress, as well as the use of modern materials such as iron, concrete and glass. Nevertheless, Luang Narimitlekakan did not graduate from any European institution, he learned about architecture from foreign textbooks. The knowledge of European modern architecture permeating Thai academia and the creation of simplicity in architectural form thus occurred within such an atmosphere.

Following the crematorium, a number of modern architectural sites were built by several European-educated architects, such as Mom Chao Itthithepsan Kridakon and Mew (Jitsen) Aphaiwong from École des Beaux-Arts in Paris and Phra Sarotrataniman and Nat Phothiprasat from Liverpool University in the UK. These architects produced modern buildings with an international-style appearance (Prakitnonthakan, 2009: 15). Examples of these geometric buildings include the Ministry of Justice building complex (1939), which the government built near the Grand Palace to commemorate Thailand regaining absolute jurisdiction in 1938 (Fig. 20),[88] the Grand Postal Building (1940) in Bang Rak (Fig. 21), Sala Chaloem Thai (1940-1941), the National Theatre and cinema on Ratchadamnoen Avenue (Fig. 22) and the commercial buildings on Ratchadamnoen Avenue (Fig. 23). The erection of these modern buildings, particularly in the Rattanakosin Island district, is indicative of what Henri Lefebvre called the "philosophy of the city" or "urban ideology", which is 'a superstructure of the society into which structures enter a certain type of city' (Lefebvre, 1996: 98). It reflects the People's Party's effort in transforming the city based on ideological grounds, that is, equality.

However, in the present day many of these modern buildings have been either destroyed or converted. Thus, while the Grand Postal Building survives until today, the other two buildings are no longer present. Sala Chaloem Thai was demolished in 1989 in order to open up the view from the avenue towards Ratchanatda Temple and the Loha Prasada (The Metal Castle) (Fig. 24); both built by King Nangklao (King Rama III, r. 1787-1851). The conservative royalist thinker, Mom Rajawongse Kukrit Pramoj, supported and legitimised the government's plan to tear down Sala Chaloem Thai. His article in *Siamrath*, a daily newspaper, published on 17th August 1989 stated that the revolutionaries had 'bad taste' and no 'love for Thai arts and culture' and therefore tried to copy the layout of Avenue des

[88] From the colonisation period during the reign of Mongkut, many Western countries were granted the extraterritorial jurisdiction. The first one occurred when the King and Great Britain's envoy, Sir John Bowring signed the Treaty of Friendship and Commerce (the Bowring Treaty) in 1885.

Champs-Élysées in Paris to Bangkok. He further encouraged the government to purge the entire environment of Rattanakosin area of all buildings that seemed to be 'not beautiful' and 'unfitting' (Pramoj, 1989). Eventually, the Supreme Court building in the Ministry of Justice complex, which had been threatened with demolition for several years, was finally demolished in 2013.[89] It will be replaced by a new building with the more traditional element of the multi-tiered gable roof (Fig. 25). The plan for the new Supreme Court Building is part of the Celebration of the Auspicious Occasion of the King's 80th Birthday Anniversary on 5th December 2007. Lastly, some commercial buildings on Ratchadamnoen Avenue were converted to the "Rattanakosin Exhibition Hall", the museum of the history of the Rattanakosin Era under the House of Chakri (Fig. 26). Consequently, the ideology of the city changed according to shifts in power with the end of the People's Party seeing the return of the royalist order to Bangkok's landscape.

Besides the detailed elaboration of the crematorium's structure, Prince Naris also described the interior of the building. He indicated that there was *phan ratthathammanun* on the top of the middle pillar, which was surrounded by 17 coffins (Fig. 27). The head side of the coffins pointed toward the pillar while the bottom side pointed outwards and was pierced in order to make a hole for candles and incense (Narisara Nuvadtivongs, Ibid). This positioning of the coffins and the *phan ratthathammanun* suggests that the constitution has supreme status as a national ideology worth dying for. For Thais the head is the most sacred part of the body, thus, holding something over one's head is an act of supreme reverence; it means that object's esteem is higher than the person. The message intended was thus clear: constitutionalism was the ideology one needs to protect with their life if necessary. In return, the persons who commit such acts of sacrifice by giving their life for the constitution are transformed into national heroes deserving of national honour and a place in the nation's memory.

The Grand Cremation was thus not only to evoke a sense of nationalism through sacrifice and to promote the concept of equality but also to console an individual's grief by rewarding the dead with a place in the national memory. According to Jay Winter, a historian of war remembrance in the 20th century, war commemoration has a psychological function as it translates individual's grief into public mourning for the dead and provides some

[89] The demolition of the Supreme Court Building ignited a conflict between the Fine Arts Department and the judiciary. Although the building had not yet been officially registered as a historical building, the Fine Arts Department insisted that it had full authority to safeguard the building under the 1962 Historical Building Act. Networks of conservationists, historians as well as public sector officials also defended the historical importance of the building. The judiciary, however, ignored the protests.

reparation for the loss (Winter, 1995). Although Winter discussed mourning and war commemoration as performed by the agencies of the civil society, his insight can also be applied to the state-organised commemoration of the Boworadet Rebellion. For instance, Prince Naris reported that that the Grand Cremation proved to be of great public interest. His letter dated 24th February 1934 stated that the cremation chamber was crowded with people who came to pay their respects to the fallen; 'every step of the *men* [funerary pyre] was filled with people as if the *men* was a human mountain, soon the candles, incenses and wood flowers for cremation flew across people's heads to the coffins like a flock of seagulls flying along the ship, snatching fish for food' (Narisara Nuvadtivongs, 1962: 126-128).

Prince Naris' description reveals that the ceremony was rather unruly with a dense mass of people throwing funerary items towards the coffins. The act of throwing such funerary items may be interpreted as the great desire of people to participate in the first state funeral ceremony for the dead who belonged to the same class as them. This phenomenon suggests that the new national consciousness that was engaged by the new discourse was constituted successfully among the Thais, as stated in Announcement of the People's Party No.1, written by Banomyong (1932), 'You, all of the people should know that our country belongs to the people—not to the King, as has been deceitfully claimed'. The people felt that they were the owner and the centre of the country for which they would fight and die, in short a member of a national community (Anderson, 1983). In this way, the funeral constructed a kinship between the dead and the living as national fellows.

Death became an opportunity for the teaching of political and civic virtue. By viewing the treatment of the death as a means of presenting *wira chon* or fallen heroes, the living were inspired with enthusiasm and love for the nation. In such circumstances, the funeral was organised partly for religious reasons as a service for the dead and partly for political reasons to evoke loyalty to the state among the living. The commemoration of the dead thus stimulated the living to participate in an act of enthusiasm and national devotion. The transformative exchange between the dead and the living took place when both were encountered; the dead became the national, constitutionalist heroes through receiving the act of reverence while the living, by performing such acts, could connect themselves with the dead through sharing the same ideological belief. Both the dead and the living that came to the cremation were thus identified and connected with constitutionalism.

The Grand Cremation was an occasion for venerating the commoner and, at the same time, contesting the royalty. Whereas the power of the new regime honoured the fallen commoners as national heroes through the organisation of their dead bodies, it sabotaged the

representative of the old regime, Prince Naris, by controlling his body through the adoption of an inappropriate military uniform. Prince Naris complained to his brother that the government asked him to wear a new military uniform with high boots despite his disabled foot. In the end, he wore a gaiter and felt very uncomfortable. (Narisara Nuvadtivongs, Ibid) Prince Damrong replied in a letter dated 25th February that he saw the picture of his brother in uniform walking with the support of a bodyguard in the *Bangkok Times* Newspaper and understood exactly how he must have had felt (Narisara Nuvadtivongs, 1962: 131-132). The military uniform on Prince Naris' body demonstrated the performativity of the new regime over the old. Not only was Prince Naris required to preside over the cremation ceremony of the government forces who had defeated his nephew, Prince Boworadet, but he was also forced to wear a uniform created by the Ministry of Defence, the institution that was responsible for that defeat. In contrast to Foucault's notion of the docile body that states that the soldier's body may be made elegant by uniform and training (Foucault, 1991), the uniform on this occasion made the prince's body seem inept, clumsy and painful. Prince Naris' uncomfortable feeling derived from the bodily rhetoric which caused him to lose honour; in that, having to be supported by a bodyguard symbolised his political incapability and incompatibility with the new world.

After the cremation with the royal fire ignited by the King's representative on 18th February, the commoners bodies were transmuted into relics and preserved in brass artillery shells, containers clearly associated with the military (Fig. 28). Being bestowed by religiosity, the ashes became a sacred object as well as an object of honour. As such, the entire funeral ceremony served to transform the commoners into virtuous noblemen inhabiting the sphere of martyrdom. They were preserved at the Ministry of Defence before moving to their final refuge, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument.

In Denial: The Safeguarding the Constitution Monument and the Boworadet War Memory

> Love the King with complete loyalty.
> Love the nation with unswerving duty.
> Love the Buddhist Trinity faithfully.
> Love honour to merit the world's praise.
>
> On all occasions show respect
> And think of your land
> As the state where Thai live in peace

We must cherish it so it endures forever.

Whoever invades the land of the Thai
We will fight to the last man, to the last mile,
Sacrificing life's blood and life itself
Rather than lose our honourable name.

If Siam endures, survives,
Then, secure, our lives go on.
But if Siam's doom arrives, can Thai endure?
Our family line is gone; the Thai are done.

(Vella and Vella, 1978: 116)

The inscription plague on the east wall of the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument (1936) bears the poem *Siamanussati*, which was written by Vajiravudh for the Siamese Expeditionary Force, the volunteer soldiers that he had sent to aid the Allies during World War I in Europe in 1918 (Fig. 29).[90] The main idea of the poem is the importance of unity or *khwam samaggi*, a value that Vajiravudh promoted during his reign as part of the formation of Thai nationalism.[91]

The presence of *Siamanussati* poem on the monument reminds the onlookers of the unity of the country's citizenry in fighting enemies, but who was the enemy in this context? A monument is an intermediary agent between the past and the present (Azaryahu, 1993: 84) but what past or what aspects of the past is the monument evoking? As Pierre Nora has argued, a site of memory is not a memory itself but its substitute created by the interaction between what happened and what is to be remembered; it is the 'deliberate and calculated secretion of lost memory' (1989: 19). The monument, as a site of memory, plays an important role in the People's Party's construction of collective memory (Halbswach, 1992). This section then outlines the role of the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument in presenting the complicated articulation of the Boworadet war memory. It deals with the framing of the official memory of the Boworadet Rebellion in relation to the revolutionary government and it discusses the function of the monument in inscribing the 17 fallen heroes

[90] Siam's entry to World War I in 1918 served as both an instrument of foreign policy and a stimulation of nationalism in the country. On 26th May 1918, Vajiravudh declared at a dinner party he hosted for the Siamese Expeditionary Force that the Siamese troops would raise the country's reputation on the world stage. A screening of some English films followed the dinner. In one of the films (title is unknown), Kipling's lines "What stands if Freedom falls? / Who dies if England lives?" appeared on the screen and served as an inspiration for the King, who had been educated in England for 9 years, to write the poem *Siamanussati* during the next morning. The troops left the country to France on 19th June 1918 and returned to Bangkok on the 1st May 1919. See Vella, Walter F. and Vella, Dorothy B. (1978) *Ibid.*, p. 112-116, 119.

[91] For a study of Thai nationalism during Vajiravudh's reign, see Vella, Walter F. and Vella, Dorothy B. (1978) *Ibid.*

to the realm of national memory. The Safeguarding the Constitution Monument is recognised as an active/performative object; it does not simply signify 'a material embodiment of remembrance' which conveys and keeps memory alive (Mayo, 1988: 62) but rather 'a technology of memory' that produces and constitutes memory (Koureas, 2007: 2).

In Thailand, war commemoration which considers the commoner soldier as a "fallen hero" is relatively new when compared to Europe and America where war memorials and monuments are the most widespread mode of public monuments and cemeteries (Mosse, 1990; Inglis, 1993; Ashplant *et al.*, 2000; Raivo in Ashplant *et al.*, 2000; Forty and Küchler, 1999). There is no historical evidence that indicates the presence of mass commemoration of the common soldiers in monumental form in Thailand before the Veteran Monument of World War I in 1919 (Fig. 30). The erection of the Veteran Monument of World War I for the fallen of the Siamese Expeditionary Force thus likely followed the tradition of war memorials for the individual common soldiers found in Europe, since Vajiravudh graduated from England and still followed many European traditions. By the time of the People's Party, the European idea of entombing unknown soldiers was adapted to local funerary practice.[92] Since Thais are not buried but cremated, the ashes of the 17 fallen heroes were placed in the monument which had a similar form to traditional *stupa* i.e. a conical, bell-shaped or square structure that enshrines relics (Fig. 31). Luang Narimitlekakan, the designer and supervisor of the monument, personally laid the ashes of the dead men inside the monument and closed the copper door (Narimitlekakan, 1957: 20).

Traditionally, memorials dedicated to those who died in important events use religious architecture such as the *stupa* or temple. They typically also only commemorate the leaders, such as kings, princes and high-ranking soldiers. Furthermore, traditional memorials are bounded by religious ceremonies since they are not only a commemorative object but also an object for the merit making of the descendants of those who passed away. The Thai art historian, Rungroj Thamrungraeng, pointed out that the Veteran Monument of World War I, which was designed by Prince Naris, marks the juncture between traditional memorials and

[92] Whereas the Veteran Monument of World War I is the first monument to commemorate the dead of the common soldier, the cult of the fallen in Thailand really began in earnest during the People's Party's period. After the Boworadet Rebellion, Phibun, who directed the government force in fighting the royalist uprising and later became the prime minister after Phahon, enhanced the importance of the military, as Thailand became involved with wars including the Franco-Thai War (1940-1941) and the Second World War (1941-1944). Several monuments were erected such as the Victory Monument (Anusaowari Chaisamoraphum, 1941), the Bravery of the 8th December Monument (Anusaowari Wira Kam 8 Thanwakhom 2484, 1950), the Thai Bravery Monument (Anusaowari Wira Thai, 1952) and the World War II Youth Volunteers Monument (Anusaowari Yuwa Chon Thahan, 1981). Generally the cult of the fallen combines patriotism with militarism and nationalism.

modern/Western monuments. As a commemorative structure that enshrined the ashes of volunteer soldiers who joined with the Allies in Europe during World War I, it takes the form of a traditional *stupa* but was placed in a non-religious setting (Thamrungraeng, 2004: 71).

Even though Thamrungraeng insisted that the form of the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument had no association with Buddhism and traditional funerary monuments (2004: 73), the combination between a traditional *stupa* and Western memorial is overtly visible. Whereas the form of the monument derived from the artillery shell that contained the relics (The Fine Art Department, 1998: 191) and may also be traced back to the pillar in the middle of the cremation chamber in the crematorium that had a *phan ratthathammanun* on the top (Fig. 27) (Prakitnonthakan, 2009: 88), it also incorporated the form and function of a traditional *stupa.* Similar to a traditional *stupa*, the structure of the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument can be divided into three parts: a high base, a body serving as a relic chamber and a conical-shaped top. Sitting atop an octagonal base, this 14-metre high monument is certainly a *stupa*-like structure with a square relic chamber (Fig. 32). There are also two rows of lotus-leaf decoration; the typical ornament of traditional-religious artefacts, on the upper part which functions as a base for the image of *phan ratthathammanun* at the top of the monument. The combination between the traditional *stupa* and the image of *phan ratthathammanun* as manifested in the structure of the monument thus provides a new visual representation of the dead in relation to national sacrifice: a memorial of the dead in the constitutionalist regime.

The appropriation of the traditional war memorial — a *stupa* — created a new aesthetic form for modern war commemoration. It altered the mode of representation by transforming a religious artefact from offering support to older institutions into providing support for the new government and giving new life to existing cultural forms (Hynes, 1992). Aesthetic representation appears to be fertile ground for political expression as it is responsive to changing political circumstances. The presence of *phan ratthathammanun,* for instance, marks the new form of constitutionalism as a civic religion and asserts the enshrined dead to the realm of martyrdom as ‘Dying for one’s country assumes a moral grandeur’ (Anderson, 1983: 144). War memory was transformed into a sacred experience and it generated religious feelings and martyrs as well as a place of worship (Mosse, 1990: 6-7). In the case of the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument, Buddhist iconography enhanced the religious aspect of the commemorative practices. Moreover, on the unveiling day, the relics in the 17 artillery shells received a *bangsukun* service from the monks at the Ministry of Defence before they were transported to the monument by the procession and

again, at the monument, after they had been enshrined (Prachachat, 17th October 1936: 5-6, 16). In this way, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument inherited from the Buddhist commemorative tradition and therefore can be placed within the canon of Thai funeral monuments.

Indeed, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument may also be considered as a cemetery or a funeral monument as it served as an extension of the Grand Cremation. The monumentalisation of the remains of the fallen continued from the Grand Cremation, in which all of the fallen soldiers remains were cremated and preserved in the artillery shells, until they reached their final refuge at the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument. This monument, which preserves the deceased in the national memory, thus should be regarded as the martyrs' monumental body in a non-human form.

As a monumental body of lost lives, this monument makes the absence present and prevents the deceased from being forgotten, securing their place in the national memory. The monumental body is therefore a signal of continuity (Llewellyn, 1991: 102-104) because it is supposed to stand permanently as a reminder for the living of heroic deeds. The names of the 17 fallen were inscribed on the west wall of the square chamber and their ashes were placed inside. Above the names was the symbol of the Ministry of Defence (Fig. 33). There are no images of the dead visible on the monument yet they are still perceived as individuals because they are represented by their names and ranks. Since being called a named is one of the conditions by which a subject is constituted in language (Butler, 1997: 2), the fallen exist in a textual form as a linguistic being.

The identity of the fallen as the commoner is further emphasised by the realistic bas-relief on the south wall that features a farmer's family in Thai traditional costume (Fig. 34). This suggests that those who reside in the relic chamber are the commoners and the lowborn who never before had a place in a national monument. Rice farming is the primary occupation of the Thais and hence the image of the farmer's family with the father holding a sickle, the mother holding an ear of paddy and their son holding a rope, emphasises the importance of common people as an essential element of the new nation.

Accordingly, a monumental body of the deceased is intended to act as an example to onlookers, a lesson for them to learn, instructing them how to behave as good citizens. The actual presence of the martyrs was always important for the effectiveness of places of commemoration (Mosse, 1990: 97). The dead in the form of ashes serves as a representation of heroic sacrifice and demonstrates that the rewards for sacrifice are honorary, as well as earning a place in the national memory. Being stored in the monument, these ashes affirmed

a place for the fallen in both the mythology of war and the memory of the people (Azaryahu, 1993: 82). The image of *phan ratthathammanun* on the top of this *stupa*-like, monumental body shapes the way in which these deceased appear in the collective memory. Their heroic act was thus interpreted as the devoting of their lives to defend constitutionalism. It also helps to emphasise and interweave the meaning and significance of the constitution as something worth defending to the death. The didactic aspect is evident.

The position of *phan ratthathammanun* at the centre of both the crematorium and the monument constituted the new meaning of *ratthathammanun* as something separate from the monarchy and the new iconography of commemorating the fallen as a sacrifice for the constitution. The connection between the commoner's body and *phan ratthathammanun* marks a break of the constitution with the old institutions. Locating this image on the top of the buildings where the bodies and the ashes of the dead reside symbolises an act of supreme worship or reverence, that is, upholding something over one's head. The constitution is thus presented as the sovereign ideology that one needs to protect with life.

Accordingly, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument became a general shrine of the fallen where a number of commemorative ceremonies were held annually to widen the public interest. The 14th October was established as a commemorative day for the Boworadet Rebellion and accordingly, on 14th October 1937, the Ministry of Defence organised a commemorative ceremony at the monument in which 17 monks performed a religious service for the fallen. There was also a film screening at night but the titles of the films shown remain unknown (NAT: (2) Prime Minister's Office, PO 0201.97.5/3). Annual commemoration therefore serves as a device to keep the Boworadet war memory alive and to strengthen the social bond that links the dead and the living (Coser in Halbwachs, 1992: 23). Paul Norton (1989) also highlights the significance of participants of commemorative ceremonies as an essential element to an organisation of collective memory since memory is conveyed and sustained by an interrelation between commemorative ceremonies and bodily practices. Annual commemoration also ensures the permanence of the memorial, maintaining its integrity and inviolability (King 1998).[93] The phenomena of commemorative ceremony further expanded to other provinces. In 1938, *Prachachat* (17th October 1938: 1, 35-36) reported that a school in Nakhon Si Thammarat in the south of Thailand had organised a commemorative ceremony. Nom Uparamai, a teacher, gave a speech to the students to see the fallen of the Boworadet Rebellion as teachers of love and sacrifice for the nation. He

[93] See also Riegl, Alois (1982) 'The Modern Cult of Monument, Its Character and Its Origin' *Opposition*, No. 25 (Fall), pp. 21-51.

further asked students to take part in a minute's silence and to plant two banana trees to commemorate the fallen.

Moreover, the plan to extend the monument square in 1939 when Phibun, the former Minister of Defence became the prime minister suggests a further enhancement of the monument and the cult of the fallen. The monument square was to be extended in order to create a grander look for the monument and to make the space more suitable for ceremonies (NAT: Prime Minister's Office, PO 0201.97.5/3). The government also developed the area of Lak Si as a centre of the Bang Khen District, the new town hall, medical station, school and police station being erected near the monument. The Democracy Temple (Wat Prachathippatai) or Phra Si Mahathat Temple, constructed in memory of the 1932 Revolution, was also located in the area. Significantly, from 1940 onwards, the families of the fallen were also invited to attend the ceremony.

Another important element that increased the authenticity of the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument was the location. The presence of the ashes of the fallen on the site where the commemorative event took place enhanced the monument's persuasive power as an authentic commemorative object. The site was thus incorporated into the commemorative landscape of Tung Bang Khen, where the real battle had taken place. The Act of the Purchase of Land and Immovable Property to Extend and Build Roads that Connects Bangkok Phra Nakhon and Don Mueang and to Construct the Monument for the Suppression of the Boworadet Rebellion by the Soldier, B. E. 2476 (1934) asserts that the monument would be erected at the open space between Prachathippat Road (changed to Phahonyothin Road in 1950) and the road from Lak Si train station (Ratchakitchanubeksa, Vol. 50, 11th February 1934: 950-959).[94] Placing them in the geographical arena of the historical event further enriched the monument's authenticity. The "myth of the place" or the narrative that exists on the place before the monument was erected was both beneficial in constituting the meaning of the monument and, in turn, benefited from the monument as the commemorative object materialised the myth into a tangible form. It proclaimed the landscape as the primary witness of the event (Azaryahu, 1993: 85-87).

[94] Before the Boworadet Rebellion, the government planned to extend and construct more roads to connect Phra Nakorn, Don Mueang and the remote area of the Lak Si District. Building new roads was largely due to military efforts to control Don Mueang and develop Don Mueang Airport; the construction of the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument was an outgrowth of this plan. Thepsongkraow, Saranyou (2013) 'Anusaowari Prap Kabot kap kan ramluek wira chon phu phithak kan patiwat' [The Monument for the Suppression of the Boworadet Rebellion and the commemoration of the fallen heroes who secured the revolution] *Silpawattanatum*, Year 34, Vol. 12 (October), pp. 112-129.

Locating the memorial monument at the real place of the event, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument thus partly derives its authenticity and sacredness from its very location. At the same time, it evokes the past and enhances the symbolic meaning of the surroundings by its commemorative nature. State rituals and commemorative objects, such as memorials and monuments, mark the land where particular events took place and in this way empty land can become a land of memory, a commemorative landscape (Raivo, 2000). As with the site of a battle, the landscape and the monument erected upon it marked Lak Si field as a site of memory and a space of remembrance. The intervention of history on a landscape, in this case the erection of the monument, indicates a "will to remember", an establishment of a narrative of the past and an attempt to prevent forgetting (Nora, 1989: 19).

However, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument did not intend for everything about the Boworadet war to be remembered and preserved. Instead, the monument is evocative of the politics of memory and commemoration, in that it expresses the very meaning of a "will to remember" by only remembering what it needs to. Despite the authenticity of the real location of the event and the remains of those who had fallen, the monument acts as an agent of oblivion because it conceals some aspects of the very event it commemorates (Forty and Küchler, 1999).[95] For example, the presence of the poem *Siamanussati* on the east wall of the relic chamber not only shows how the royal heritage could be appropriated by the new power but also, more importantly, suggests the problem of representing the engagement of the monarchy in the conflict.

Providing a place for the royal legacy in the monument has been interpreted as the People's Party's declaration of loyalty to the monarch or as a means to legitimise the suppression of the rebellion, asserting that their act cohered with the King's desire for national unity (Phuyothin *et al.*, 1996: 34). However, these interpretations are not particularly convincing, taking into consideration the unveiling speech and the many different names in the monument's history. Consequently, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument instead represents the difficulties in conceptualising the Boworadet war memory, especially since at the core of the event there is a royalist uprising. Memorialisation thus in some senses became problematic. Instead of commemorating the defeat of the royalist rebellion, the narrative employed tried to make people forget the bitter and undesirable past by altering the cause of the event, from an ideological conflict between royalism and

[95] Forgetting is an inseparable part of the larger project of remembering. For the issue of collective oblivion as a mode of expelling memory in the society, see for example, Henderson, John (1999) *Memory and Forgetting*, London; New York: Routledge and Forty, Adrian and Küchler, Susanne (1999) *The Art of Forgetting*, Oxford: Berg.

constitutionalism to a national division deriving from a lack of *khwam samaggi*. In this process of remembering to forget (Rowlands, 1999), the pre-existing discourse and legacy of the absolutist regime were assimilated into the articulation of the Boworadet Rebellion war memory in order to construct a discourse of unity within the nation through the obscuring of certain facts.

Whereas the Grand Cremation at Sanam Luang in 1934 was an overt challenge to the monarch, the unveiling ceremony of the monument in 1936 demonstrated the government's reluctance to celebrate their victory. The unveiling speech of the Minister of Defence Phibun on 15th October 1936 thus stated that this monument commemorated the depressing events in which the Thai people had been divided and killed each other; it was the incident he hated most and he 'truly ha[d] no pleasure to see it' (Secretariat of the Cabinet (2): SC.3.37/1). The regent and presider of the ceremony, Prince Arthit Thip-apha,[96] replied that the monument evoked an unfavourable event and he would like the Thai people to take this commemorative occasion to learn from the past. He asserted that the monument was a reminder for all Thais to remain united for the prosperity of the country (Ibid.). These two speeches responded to *Siamanussati* as they stressed the importance of the national unity or *khwam samaggi.* Moreover, they emphasised that the loss of life was meaningful as a *memento* of a national tragedy and was needed in order to prevent history from repeating itself. These speeches present the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument as an object of remembrance of the horror of war, not of the glory of the victory. However melancholic they may sound, war memorials effectively celebrate the loss of individual lives by turning them into a national collective sacrifice, a value that the state aimed to impose on its people (Rowlands, 1999).[97] At the end, Phibun dedicated the monument to Thailand as a reminder of the importance of unity for the country

[96] Prince, Lieutenant-General Arthit Thip-apha was the regent to the child king Ananda (King Rama VIII, r. 1935-1946). After Prajadhipok abdicated on 2nd March 1935, the National Assembly recognised his nephew, the nine-year-old Prince Ananda Mahidol as the Eighth King of Siam. The Regency Council was formulated because the King was still a child. Prince, Lieutenant-General Arthit Thip-apha was the President of the Regency Council. The King, who was born in Germany and spent most of his youth in Switzerland, first visited Thailand in 1938 with his mother Mom Sangwal and younger brother Prince Bhumibol Adulyadej (King Bhumibol or King Rama IV, r. 1946-present).

[97] The relationship between mourning and melancholia is analysed in Freud, Sigmund (1957) 'Mourning and Melancholia' *Standard Edition*, Vol. 14, London: Hogarth Press. This subject becomes part of the studies of war commemorative culture. See for example, Sherman, D. J. (1994) 'Art, Commerce and the Production of Memory in France after World War I' in Gillis, J. R. (ed.) *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 170-198; Winter, Jay (1995) *Sites of Memory/Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and Rowlands, Michael (1999) 'Remembering to Forget: Sublimation as Sacrifice in War Memorials' in Forty, Adrian and Küchler, Susanne (eds.) *The Art of Forgetting*, Oxford and New York: Berg, p. 129-145.

For the goal of national unity, the memory of national division is threatening. Yet what had caused such national division remained unstated, the word "rebellion" not being mentioned anywhere in the speeches. The ideological conflict that had caused the fighting was excluded from the speeches because the event was simply described as the "national division". The fact that the conflict was among people within the nation, not an outside enemy like in *Siamanussati,* and that it was led by a member of the royal family made the memory of the Boworadet Rebellion hard to accept although it was still necessary that it be commemorated. To heal this national wound the political war was simplified to a national division caused by conflicting views ignoring that it was chiefly about the ruling system of the country, constitutionalism or royalism. This implies a form of denial in recognising the conflict as an ideological war between the old and the new regime. These speeches expressed the dilemma of articulating the Boworadet war memory and suggested a redemptive function of the monument — kind of memorial politics in the struggle to construct an appropriate memory.

The unwillingness to remember that conceals this particular aspect of the event is also manifested in the names of the monument. The state's exercise of power over the past events in order to construct a national narrative is a selective process in which the state chooses to give certain meanings through the naming of events. Hence, the politics of naming is part of the memory-making process and an attempt to institute a preferred definition of a conflict, i.e. how it would be given meaning, remembered and commemorated (Ashplant *et al.*, 2000: 53-55). The different names for the monument not only raise issues concerning the relationship between language and memory making but also indicate the complicated nature of the Boworadet war memory. These names suggest that the People's Party struggled to shape the memory of the past events for the public, even though they had won the battle, as each name focuses on different perspectives of the event. It is also notable that the extent to which the naming reflected anti-royalist sentiments decreased significantly over time.

The first two names that appear in the report of the 7th meeting (ordinary) of the House of Representatives on 18th January 1934 (cited in Thepsongkraow, 2013: 113) are the Monument for the Suppression of the Boworadet Rebellion (Anusaowari Prap Kabot) and the Monument for the Suppression of the Boworadet Rebellion by the Soldiers (Anusaowari Thahan Prap Kabot). These names convey a strong sense of triumph over royalist opponents and they clearly identify the event although they were not used during the official occasion. Rather, in the unveiling ceremony of 1936, the monument was referred to as the Monument of the Seventeen Soldiers and Policemen (Anusaowari Sipjet Thahan lae Tamruat)

(Prachachat, 17th October 1936: 5). This name does not narrate the events that had caused the monument's erection but instead simply states the number and categories of the fallen. As a commemorative object typically serves as a focus of memory for the honoured dead and an object of remembrance of a past event, a name that does not mention the cause of the deaths is rather unusual. Such awkward naming reveals the uneasiness of the war memory. The same name was also cited in *Thai nai samai Ratthathammanun* (Thailand in [the] constitutional period), a book commemorating National Day on 24th June 1939 and the regaining of independence in legal jurisdiction and taxation after the unequal treaties signed during the reign of Mongkut (Public Relations Department, 1939).

In 1940, the government under Phibun proposed a change of name from the Monument for the Suppression of the Boworadet Rebellion (Anusaowari Prap Kabot) to the Lak Si Monument (Anusaowari Lak Si) (cited in Thepsongkraow, Ibid). Although there was no official agreement made to the name change, the monument was referred to as the "Lak Si Monument" on most official documents during Phibun's military regime. The change of name from one that related to the event to one that focused on the geographical location possibly reflected an attempt by Phibun to degrade the memory of the separation within the military during the Boworadet Rebellion (Thepsongkraow, 2013: 114). Phibun's proposal for changing the name may also reflect some discomfort with the meaning presently being generated about the past event.

Another name, the Luang Amnuaisongkram Monument (Anusaowari Luang Amnuaisongkram) was mentioned once in a Cabinet Meeting regarding the construction of Wat Phra Si Mahathat (also known as Wat Prachathippatai or Democracy Temple) at Bang Khen on 13th September 1940 (Phuyothin *et al.*, 1996: 30). Luang Amnuaisongkram (Thom Kesakomon) was a member of the People's Party, Phibun's colleague and the highest ranked officer among the 17 dead men.

It is not known precisely when the name of "Safeguarding the Constitution Monument" (Anusaowari Phithak Rattathummanun) was first mentioned but it became the present official name as it appears on all monument signage. This name could be interpreted as emphasising an association with the image of *phan ratthathammanun* on the top of the monument and the Safeguarding the Constitution Medal (Fig. 13) that Prajadhipok bestowed upon those who took part in the suppression of the rebellion (Thepsongkraow, 2013: 114). The name also provides closer reference to the actual event when compared with the previous names (except for the initial first two names proposed). This name commemorates the act of the 17 soldiers and policemen specifically as an act of safeguarding the

constitution. However, the enemies of the constitution remain invisible in this name, making it difficult for the public to recognise with whom these dead men fought. The absence of the defeated, the Boworadet rebels, implies that the war between constitutionalism and royalism had become an undesirable memory for the nation. Hence, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument can be regarded as 'an anti-monument enjoining one to forget more than to remember' (Levine, 2006: 121).

Whereas official memory is expressed mostly in permanent memorials and other commemorative practices to recall the meaning of the past events (Ashplant *et al.*, 2000: 22), the different identities of the monument manifested by the various names attributed reveal that the remembrance of the Boworadet Rebellion is impermanent and in a state of flux. These naming incidents not only demonstrate the relationship between language and representation of war but also the ways in which the state has attempted to search for the most appropriate narration and remembrance of the Boworadet Rebellion.

The government further complicated the idea of national division by adopting the story of the Spanish Civil War, the war between the communists and the military, in a souvenir book published on the unveiling occasion.[98] Although the articulation of an official war memory usually supports the pre-existing war narratives, providing a national repertoire of usable images, plots and figures (Ashplant *et al.*, 2000: 22), the Boworadet Rebellion, as a war in which the commoner triumphed over royalty, had no past to connect to. The alternative was thus to draw a comparison between the situation and the remote war in Spain. The government thus imaginatively took the Spanish Civil War as an example of internal conflict occurring due to national division and tried to place this interpretation onto the cause of the Boworadet Rebellion, ignoring the real cause of competition between the new and the old institutions.

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[98] There is another souvenir publication distributed on the Grand Cremation on 18th February 1934. Prior to the Grand Cremation, Prince Wan and Luang Wichitwathakan proposed to the Cabinet that they should compile a commemorative book about the Boworadet Rebellion for educational purposes. Instead of having the government's institutions compile a book, the government would invite some newspaper editors to make a book that was as neutral as possible, and thus recognised as true and legitimate. The government appointed Nate Poonwiwat, the editor of *Si Krung* newspaper and a member of the House of Representatives to be the chief editor. See NAT: Prime Minister's Office, PO 0201.1/17: *The compilation of the government of the King of Siam's statements and announcements to the military officers, the civilian officers and the people* is comprised of the government's statements and announcements made from the beginning to the end of the Boworadet Rebellion, as well as a brief report on the event. In addition, it provides some pictures of the event, key persons in the military and the government and some of the fallen. The names and ranks of all the fallen are presented in the publication too. This publication might therefore be considered as a record of the event, a commemorative book on the Boworadet Rebellion. Thus, it might be more sensible to publish a book with another subject for the unveiling ceremony of the monument.

The souvenir book released on the unveiling occasion in which the report of the Spanish Civil War was published reveals that, other than articulating the difficult war memory, the government took this monument as a means to counter any accusations of communism. The poem *Siamanussati* that started with 'Love the King with complete loyalty', the absence of the word "rebellion" in the unveiling speeches, the different names of the monument and the story of the Spanish Civil War as an example of the national division, all indicate a general act of denial. The facts that the crisis being memorialised occurred from an internal affair and the enemy came not from outside but from within the nation were unpleasant facts that needed to be concealed.

Therefore, the souvenir book functions as a declaration that the People's Party was not communist, as the rebels had accused it of being. The foreword of the souvenir book states that the Thais should learn about the Spanish Civil War as an example of the result of national division, or *taek khwam samaggi*. Moreover, it claimed that it was the duty of all Thais to safeguard the country from the evils of communism since communism had ruined every country it entered (Ministry of Defence, 1936). While the front cover of the souvenir book presents a drawing of the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument (referred to as the Monument of the Seventeen Soldiers and Policemen) (Fig. 35), the back cover displays a picture of an event which has no relation to the monument. Specifically, it shows the image of the corpses of the nuns that were unearthed by the communists in Spain (Fig. 36). The header, written in bold, declares "Spain lost" and the description under the picture states that, 'this picture demonstrates the evil of communist who have dug up the nuns' corpses in order to defame and destroy religion'. The messages in the two white text boxes affirm that Buddhism and the military protect the peace of the country, and that if the Thais do not wish to be like Spain they should not speak but work, be *samaggi* and disciplined. The illustrations in the book further highlight the cruelty of communism, particular towards religion, showing the ruins of a burnt church (Fig. 37) and an attack on a statue of Christ (Fig. 38), while, in contrast, the pictures of the military are positive, emphasising the role of the military as the rescuer (Fig. 39).

Having Buddhist symbols embedded in the monument reassured those with anti-communist sentiments. Thus, the north wall of the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument contains an image of *dhammachakka*, a Buddhist symbol of national peace (The Fine Art Department, 1998: 191) (Fig. 40). The utilisation of such Buddhist imagery signifies that the People's Party and constitutionalism are not in conflict with religion and thus vindicates their position as non-communists (Phuyothin *et al.*, 1996: 37-38). In fact, from the Grand

Cremation to the monument, the monks performed several religious services in honour of the fallen. Therefore, Buddhist funerary practices and their participation in the commemoration of the fallen created a new rite for democracy as they reacted responsively to the changing political circumstance, transforming from supporters of the old institutions to supporters of the new ones. The image of Buddhist *dhammachakka* on the north wall of the monument emphasised that Buddhism was an ally of the People's Party. It served a dual role in communicating with the public. Firstly, it declared that the revolutionary was not communist despite the royalist accusations and secondly, it emphasised that the government had no intention of harming Buddhism, one of the pillars of Thai nationalism. Consequently, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument served as a double denial of the engagement of the monarchy in the national tragedy and of the People's Party as a communist group.

While the erection of the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument demonstrates the state's act of constituting historical fact, a version of narrative of the Boworadet Rebellion in the People's Party's perspective, the opposite version of the narrative emerged after the government collapsed in 1947 following a coup. As a monument always commemorates the past in line with the narrative of the ruling socio-political order (Azaryahu, 1993: 84), the change of the hegemonic power pushed up an opposing vision of the past and this in turn affected the monument. Lui Kiriwat, the former editor of *Krung Thep Deli Mail* Newspaper and a prisoner of the Boworadet Rebellion in Tarutao Prison Island wrote in his book *Prachathippatai 17 pi* (17 years of democracy) that this monument stood as an "insistence of hatred" because it recalled the war within the nation. The dead men did not perform anything brave and therefore the monument was meaningless (Kiriwat, 1950). The impact of the monument on Kiriwat, who participated in the events but was on the defeated side, differs from that of the revolutionary as it evoked his resentful memory.

In this circumstance, memory becomes the ground on which the political battle is fought. Kiriwat's alteration of the monument's narrative and reconstruction of a new meaning to the historic past, a memory that contested the People's Party's version, emphasises Pierre Nora's statement that, 'memory is blind to all but [the] group that it binds' (1989: 9). For the former Boworadet Rebellion prisoner the monument was greatly offensive. His perception of the monument shows that the onlooker's encounter with the monument does not always cohere with the intention of those who conceived it. As Jan Assmann has put it, 'political memory lasts as long as the correspondent political institution' (Assmann, 2010: 122), the meaning of the Safeguarding of the Constitution Monument can thus always be multiplied and established as a new historical memory, even one antithetical to its official

intended purpose. These layers of memories have problematised the memorial intention of the monument, emphasising the loose connection between memory and object (Young, 1994; Küchler, 1999). Yet this affirmed the monument's performative efficacy and it status as *lieu de mémoire*, a commemorative representation that failed to be what its founder hoped but, indeed, has clearly developed a life of its own.

The Boworadet war commemoration and the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument mark a fall of royal power. With Prajadhipok announcing his abdication in 1935, and the throne passing to the nine-year-old Prince Ananda Mahidol, the People's Party reached its zenith. When the People's Party was most powerful, artistic practices had gone further from promoting equality to praising commoners as higher than the elite. Whereas this chapter addressed simplicity as the new architectural language that replaced the aesthetic of ornamentation of the royal regime, the next chapter focuses on realism as the aesthetic language for the working class. It investigates the body politics manifested in the sculptures shown in the Annual Constitution Fairs. The new trend in depicting the ideal body as the muscular body serves as a critique of the monarchy as well as a new model of the ideal Thai body, that is, the body of a working class person.

Chapter 3

The Armoured Body: The Art of the People's Party and the Rise of the Working Class

By the early stage of the formation of the People's Party's ideology, the foundation stone of the mechanism of new culture had already been laid. The impact of the 1932 Revolution to the development of Thai modern art was the shift of art patronage from the court to the commoner's government (Michaelsen, 1993: 60; Krairiksh 1983: 65; Kunavichayanont, 2002: 40). The Fine Art Department (Krom Silpakorn), the national organisation responsible for the preservation, support and promotion of arts and culture in Thailand that had been founded in 1912 in the reign of Vajiravudh was moved from the control of the Royal Institute (Ratchabanditsabha) to the Ministry of Education in 1933.[99] In the People's Party's regime, art had become an effective weapon in the ideological and class struggles.

> Let me take this speech as an appeal to writer friends, please help me for a while. You may write novels, soap operas, dramas or whatever, but please depict the protagonist as strong, muscular, diligent and persevering. Write about those who do hard work. But those stories about magical creation, such as producing a castle by beating a gong three times or getting to be the King by doing nothing, I want to burn them all (Wichitwatakan, 1940: 22).

Following the 1932 Revolution, the monarchy gradually declined with the defeat of the Boworadet Rebellion in 1933, the abdication of Prajadhipok and the succession of the nine-year-old King Ananda in 1935. As the People's Party geared towards the demolition of class structure and elevation of the proletariat,[100] the quotation from the speech, *Manussapatiwat* (The Human Revolution) given by Luang Wichitwatakan (Kim Liang Watanapruda or Wichit Wichitwatakan, hereinafter, Wichit) the first Director General of the Fine Art Department[101] at the Ministry of Defence Club on 16th November 1939[102]

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[99] The department was responsible for supporting the seven branches of the arts: sculpture, painting, music, drama, speech, architecture and literature, but this thesis focuses only on fine art.

[100] There was no king in the country when Wichit delivered this speech in 1937. King Ananda Mahidol, first visited Thailand in 1938. The long absence of the King in the country thus allowed the People's Party to reach its zenith.

[101] As a key figure in the development of official Thai nationalism, Wichit did not work with only the People's Party. To the end of his life in 1962, he held various official positions from a lowly clerk in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the reign of Vajiravudh to Director General of the Fine Arts Department in the People's Party's regime and the special advisor on national administration and general policy planning to Prime Minister Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat in the pro-monarchy government. For more elaboration of Wichit and his works, see for example, Barmé, Scot (1993) *Luang Wichit Wathakan and the Creation of a Thai Identity*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies and Sattayanurak, Saichon (2002) *Khwam plian plaeng nai kan sang chat*

encapsulates the main issue that this chapter attempts to address: the relationship between the arts and the concept of the strong, armoured body as central to the eradication of the social hierarchy.

Wichit, who was described by Sir Josiah Crosby, the British Minister in Bangkok in the years preceding the Second World War as a "pocket Goebbels"[103], masterminded the People's Party's cultural apparatus. Interestingly, the Director General of the Fine Art Department compared his role to that of Mussolini. Wichit's article "*Latthi chu chat*" (Nationalism) published in *Duang Prathip* newspaper on 25th June 1933 evidently demonstrated his admiration for the Italian fascist leader: 'If Mussolini can boast that his fascism has brought prosperity to Italy at the present time, I would like to be able to boast that my nationalism will bring prosperity and progress to Siam in the future' (Wichit, 1933 cited in Barmé, 1993: 78).[104]

As a chief ideologue and propagandist of the socio-political and cultural campaign, Wichit realised the value and potential of the arts and culture in constructing and strengthening nationalistic sentiment in relation to the proletarian culture. Since the arts have become cultural products of nationalism (Anderson, 1983), the aim of the Fine Art Department was to initiate new conceptual, socio-cultural frameworks for the "new" Siamese people and society, re-organising new traits and behaviours in order for Thailand to achieve the state of a "civilised" nation (Wichit, 1935). By urging writers to recognise what their country wanted from them, Wichit's speech raises questions beyond the realm of literature to the interconnection between artistic convention and ideology, political belief and social class (Antal, 1966) as well as the relationship between the materiality of the body and its importance as a marker of class differentiation (Grosz, 1994: 19; Skeggs, 1997: 82).

The body is both material and representational (Holiday and Hassard, 2001) as it is always produced and consumed within particular contexts (Cresswell 1996; Sibley, 1995). As a physical domain of contestation of the post-1932 political culture, *Manussapatiwat* formulated the body as a central trope and a site for political revision of class structure in

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Thai lae khwam pen thai doi Luang Wichitwatakan [The Changes in the Construction of the Thai Nation and Thai National Identity by Luang Wichitwatakan], Bangkok: Matichon.

[102] *Manussapatiwat* was later broadcasted on the national radio on 29th November 1939 under the command of the then Prime Minister Phibun. The speech was also republished on various occasions. This thesis refers to the republication in the cremation volume of Luang Prachanatthanakon (Lui Saiyanon) and Phun Saiyanon in 1940. See Wichitwatakan (1940) 'Manussapatiwat' [The Human Revolution], *The Cremation Volume of Luang Prachanatthanakon (Lui Saiyanon) and Phun Saiyanon*, Bangkok: Phra Jan, p. 2-27.

[103] Great Britain, Foreign Office. F.O. 3071/22214, 10th August 1938.

[104] In 1932, Wichit also published a book with Thai Mai Press entitled *Mussolini*, which was the adoption of *Le Fascisme c'est Mussoloni*, by French author Louis Roya.

relation to nation-building. Muscularity became a dominant paradigm in the revolutionary discourse in which the physiology of the body conflated with a moral of working class ethos[105] — an ability to work hard as a means to obtain labour. As Wichit declared 'workers were those who bring progress and prosperity to the nation, especially those who do manual works' (1935: 24) and therefore 'should take pride and honour' (Ibid). Studying the body in the People's Party's regime is therefore a basis for exploration of the relationship between political, ideology-related class status and Thai nationalism. The revolutionary regime's demands in the arts demonstrate an attempt to evaluate the strong and muscular body of the commoner as the new model of the ideal working body. For the People's Party government, arts were educative and exemplary devices, the vehicles of ideological reformation.

The construction of a nationalistic sensibility in relation to physical strength was stressed in Phibun's period (1938-1944) in the context of the pre-Second World War period and the rise of Japanese military power in Asia (Kasetsiri, 2008). The close relationship between the People's Party and the Japanese government led to a series of coalitions moving from supporting Siam in revoking the treaties of foreign extraterritorial rights between 1935 and 1938[106] to a military alliance with the Axis Powers in 1941. Wartime had intensified the importance of physical strength and the citizenry to the country and to the relationship between Siam and Japan, and Italy and Germany, the countries that would later become the Axis alliance in the Second World War. At the same time, the state's promotion for arts was highly significant as the government's programmes were mostly based on examples from these nations (Vella and Vella, 1978). This context was the condition for the adoption of Western realism. As such, the idea of the heroic, armoured body that provided a guideline for the new way of inscribing virtue on the body with emphasis on notions of duty and devotion to the nation was no longer solely a domestic issue. This chapter will further investigate the establishment of the People's Party's official art and how its concentration on depicting strong human figures as the ideal type for Thai people functioned in their nation-building project both domestically and internationally.

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[105] The relationship between the physiology of the body and the intellectual and moral qualities of men is discussed in Michael Hatt's analysis of the image of masculinity in the second half of the nineteenth century in America. See Hatt, Michael (1993) 'Muscles, morals, mind: the male body in Thomas Eakins' Salutat' in Adler, Kathleen and Pointon, Marcia (eds.) *The Body Imaged: The Human Form and Visual Culture since the Renaissance*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 57-69.

[106] These treaties were signed in the pre-revolutionary time. The success of the People's Party in revoking these treaties enabled Siam to regain complete independence with regard to legal jurisdiction and taxation. The government built the Ministry of Justice building complex in 1939 to commemorate this event. The Supreme Court Building was torn down in 2013 (see Chapter 2).

The art of the People's Party has constituted a stylistic phase in the history of Thai modern art. Taking the working class as the new content of art, it was both a cause and an effect of the transformation of Thai society by the revolutionary government (Prakitnonthakan, 2009). This chapter concerns two mains issues: the emergence of realism as an aesthetic language of the working class[107] and the body as both a social object, a text to be marked, traced, written upon or inscribed by various regimes of institutional power[108] and a performative agency for social construction[109] represented by such language. It examines the muscular bodies depicted in the sculptures shown in the Annual Constitution Fairs between 1937 and 1938. These sculptures will be interpreted as performative practice that undermined the social hierarchy and further propagated the idea of the nation's progress by the hand of the strong and healthy citizen.

While Chapters 1 and 2 employed the theory of performativity to discuss the constitution of the new ideology of constitutionalism in relation to ritual performances, architecture and commemoration, this chapter engages with artwork performatively to interrogate their meaning and social implications (Jones and Stephenson, 1999). Here the theory of performativity serves as a critical mode of thinking about art in relation to class struggle and nation-building. It explains both the performativity of meaning production of a piece of artwork and the performativity of the artwork itself as a promotion of the muscular body. The sculptures in the Annual Constitution Fairs had a performative function as the "*object-lessons*", 'sites where the hidden truth of the citizen, the modern individual subject, could seem to be (re)discovered and read' (Preziosi, 1999: 32). As such, they were

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[107] Frederick Antal is a Marxist art historian. His work *Florentine Painting and its Social Background* (1948) explains the close relationship between artistic style and social class through a study of art patronage in the Italian Renaissance. See Antal, Frederick (1966) *Classicism and Romanticism, with Other Studies in Art History*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd. Despite its influence in the study of the social history of art, his methodology was criticised for charging too much on the social, political or economic contexts of art production and thereby neglecting the artist's subjectivity. For the review and criticism of Antal's work, see Meiss, Millard (1949) 'Florentine Painting and Its Social Background' *Art Bulletin*, Vol. 31 (June), pp. 143-149 and Chapter 3 in Hemingway, Andrew (ed.) (2006) *Marxism and the History of Art: From William Morris to the New Left*, London; Ann Arbor; MI: Pluto Press. This thesis is aware of the deficiency of Antal's methodology but will employ it in an analysis of the art of the People's Party as the revolutionary state's art that promotes the rise of the working class.

[108] See for example Schilder, Paul (1978); Merleau-Ponty, Maurice (1962); Foucault, Michael (1978); Foucault, Michael (1991).

[109] Many feminist scholars including Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous, Gayatri Spivak, Jane Gallop, Moira Gatens, Vicki Kirby, Judith Butler, Naomi Schor and Monique Wittig argue that body is not simply a blank page on which culture is inscribed but performatively interwoven with the constitution of meaning, signification and representation of the body. The body has long been a subject of Western philosophical debates. For further discussion of debates about the body from Descartes' dualism to phenomenology, psychoanalysis and gender studies, see for example, Welton, Donn (ed.) (1998) *Ibid*.; Welton, Donn (ed.) (1999) *Ibid.* and Grosz, Elizabeth (1994) *Ibid*.

pedagogical bodies — examples of the desirable body of the strong and healthy proletariat — teaching the viewers about the national ideals and their expected role as its citizens.[110]

Defining the Ideal Body

> Rama, the protagonist of Ramayana, is the weakest man. …Yet the author is capable of making the reader think that Rama is a noble man, a figure of virtue and a superb human being. Ramayana has been a model for many of our works of literature of which most protagonists would have a good life without having to work hard. …This manner is different from the protagonists in Chinese and Western literature who are basically muscular and strong (Wichit, 1940: 15-16).

Political revolution always gives rise to a cultural revolution because art and culture are essential to the creation and sustainment of political legitimacy and hegemony. For Wichit, the most important part of a revolution is human revolution (manussapatiwat); those who revolted without trying to entirely change people's consciousness only did it 'half-way' and therefore 'dug his [sic] own grave' (9). Hence, political revolution, in his words, a "coup d'état" must follow with a long period of cultural revolution to change human consciousness (4). As Gramsci wrote in *The Prison Notebook* (1932-33) 'cultural policy will above all be negative, a critique of the past; it will be aimed at erasing from the memory and at destroying' (Gramsci, Hoare and Nowell Smith 1971: 263-264). A new dominant authority must intrinsically be a reactionary, the negation of the old authority and/or the traditional. *Manussapatiwat*, which denigrated Rama, the protagonist in the Hindu epic "Ramayana", who was a reincarnation of the Hindu God Vishnu, as the "weakest man" and therefore alluded to the Rama kings of House Chakri[111], demonstrated Gramsci's way of constituting

[110] The limitations of this chapter are due to a shortage of written accounts about the artwork and the competitions. There are some short interviews of some sculptors who submitted the works to the competitions that informed the enthusiastic atmosphere in arts circles but the public reception was difficult to trace. Bhirasri's article 'Jittakam and pratimakam samai mai nai Siam' [Modern Sculpture and Painting in Siam] written in 1938 refers to the criticism of an art exhibition in the fair of 1937. Bhirasri wrote that the critic, whom he did not cite by name, had suggested the artists create something more traditional such as a Buddhist statue but the sculpture was already good. See Bhirasri, Silpa (1938) 'Jittakam and pratimakam samai mai nai Siam' [Modern sculpture and painting in Siam], translated by Jarun Malakul, *Silpakorn*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (June), pp. 57-64.

[111] The kings of the Chakri Dynasty are referred to as Rama, an avatar of the Hindu God Vishnu in Ramayana. The practice can be traced back to Ayutthaya period (1351-1767) when the concept of Hindu kingship from the Khmer kingdom (now Cambodia) spread in the region. Further literature on the concept of *Devaraja* (Divine King) and the Thai kingship, see Phromsuthirak, Maneepin (1982) 'Bot lakon rueang Ramakien: Phap sathon Phra Phutthayotfa Chulalok Maharaj' [Ramayana: The reflection of King Phutthayotfa Chulalok the Great] *The Journal of the Faculty of Arts, Silpakorn University*, Vol. 5, pp. 13-21 and Eosiwong, Nidhi and Phatthiya, Akhom (1984) *Siram Thepnakhon: Ruam khwam riang waduai prawatsat Ayutthaya ton ton* [The angel city of Rama: Collection of essays on the history of early Ayutthaya], Bangkok: Matichon.

cultural hegemony. Wichit's speech addressed the reliance of politics on the body aesthetic (Siebers, 2000) as it performed an act of hostility by marking a connection between traditional art and the defunct monarchical regime. By denouncing the frail and fragile body of the Thai elite as a delinquent body, the speech declared that the muscular and powerfully-built body according to Chinese and Western literature conventions was the preferred type of body for the new regime.

The change of perception towards the body in *Manussapatiwat* revealed the historicity of the body as a social construct from different historical periods and evaluation criteria (Butler, 1993) and therefore capable of being an embodiment of abstract concepts (Scholz, 2000). Yearning for the robust body, like that of the Chinese and Western models, the state's attempt in re-modelling the Thai body aimed at using it as both an instrument in demolishing the existing class status and a means of leading to the nation's progress. The body was a centre of the state (Meizer and Norberg, 1998) and, thus, a manifestation of power (Foucault, 1991). It was one of the state's central concerns as the core of constituting new values and ideas of citizenship of the revolutionary regime (Kawinraweekun, 2002). Wichit's espousal of the armoured body indicates the relationship between physical strength, labour works and the nation; those who possess such a "good body" are ready to work for the nation's progress. The reconceptualisation of the body image by the People's Party government thus upgraded the importance of the proletariat to be a crucial element in nation-building by associating them with the nation. This evaluation of the working body marks the relationship between health, social identity, moral integrity and nationalism (Alter, 2004).

Manussapatiwat was not the first government propaganda related to the armoured body because the People's Party had since 1933 created several institutions to promote the concept of a strong physical body in relation to nation-building. The Department of Physical Education was founded in 1933 to manage a national physical education programme. With help from the Department of Public Health and the Department of Science it launched a new programme in 1934 concerning food and exercise to improve the people's health. The state's promotion of health continued a year later with the building of the National Stadium (Public Relations Department, 1940). The armoured body as the object towards the goal of modernity, civilisation and a powerful nation was particularly emphasised in Phibun's period. In 1939, Phibun's government raised a campaign that encouraged Thai people to "eat more dishes, eat less rice" because it had been reported that the Thais were eating too much rice; they needed more protein and minerals (Public Relations Department, 1940). The campaign poster showed images of a healthy man and woman, smiling happily in athlete's

costumes; the five main food groups that one needed to eat every day to stay healthy surrounded them (Fig. 41). The message reads "eat more dishes, eat less rice to grow stronger". This phenomenon demonstrated the state's power in shaping and manipulating the body of its citizens (Foucault, 1991), forcing the body to be written over and re-defined (Grosz, 1994: 117).[112]

Phibun's government also issued "Ratthaniyom", a series of cultural mandates to re-shape Thai people as "modernised" and "civilised" by Western standards.[113] Wichit (1940: 10) considered the Ratthaniyom to be part of the People's Party's human revolution programme, along with the Prime Minister's speeches on public radio, the government announcements and law. One of its aims was to regulate both the physical and cultural aspects of the body since it was convinced that a civilised body was the mark of civilisation: Thai people needed to be both strong and cultivated, having a vigorous, healthy, refined manner and appearance (NAT: Ministry of Education: ME0701.29/1).[114] The 11th Ratthaniyom issued in 1941, which consisted of various activities that the government considered good for the Thais, encouraged people to exercise at least one hour a day because healthy citizens were essential for the nation (Ratchakitchanubeksa, Vol. 58, 8th September 1941: 1132-1133).[115] Phibun's cultural nationalism and his concentration on body-building grew within the specific context of both the internal politics of the post-1932 period and the

[112] Many scholars have discussed the state's inscription of power on the body, for example, Patricia Simpson's works on the construction of the ideal Soviet body in the Stalinist era and Fae Brauer's works on the French muscular body. See Simpson, Patricia (2004) 'The Nude in Soviet Socialist Realism: Eugenics and Images of the New Soviet Person in the 1920s-1940s' *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Art*, 4&5 (2&1), 113-137; Simpson, Patricia (2008) 'Bolshevism and "Sexual Revolution": Visualising New Soviet Woman as an Eugenic Ideal, 1917-1932' in Brauer, Fae and Callen, Anthea (eds.) *Art, Sex and Eugenics: Corpus Delecti.* Ashgate Publishing, p. 209-238; Simpson, Patricia (2015) 'Beauty and the Beast: Imaging Human Evolution at the Darwin Museum Moscow in the Early Revolutionary Period' in Brauer, Fae & Keshavjee, Serena (eds.) *Picturing Evolution and Extinction: Regeneration and Degeneration in Modern Visual Culture*, Chapter10, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle, UK, p. 157-178.

[113] The series of cultural mandates were part of Phibun's cultural nationalism. The mandates ranged from encouraging the use of standard Thai language, and discouraging regional dialects, to adopting Western attire and table manners by means of fork and spoon. Phibun's cultural policy was discussed in the seminar "Jomphon P. Phibunsongkram kap kan mueang Thai samai mai" [Field Marshall Pleak Phibunsongkram and Modern Thai Politics] at Thammasart University in 1993. See the section 'Nayobai watthanatham khong Jomphon P. Phibunsongkram' [The cultural policy of Field Marshall Pleak Phibunsongkram] in Kasetsiri, Charnvit *et al*. (eds.) (1997) *Banteuk kan sammana: Jomphon P. Phibunsongkram kab kan mueang Thai samai mai* [The seminar records: Field Marshall Pleak Phibunsongkram and modern Thai politics], Bangkok: The Foundation for the Promotion of Social Sciences and Humanities Textbooks Project.

[114] Further reading on Phibun and the construction of the Thai body see, Kawinraweekun, Kongsakon (2002) *Kan sang rang kai phonlamueang thai nai samai Jompon P. Phibunsongkram Pho. So. 2481-2487* [Constructing the body of Thai citizens during the Phibun Regime, 1938-1944], MA Thesis, Faculty of Sociology and Anthropology, Thammasart University, Bangkok: Thammasart University.

[115] When Japan was nearly defeated in 1944, the National Assembly forced Phibun to resign. The state's intensive promotion of art was also dissolved.

international politics of the Franco-Thai War (1940-1941) and the Second World War (in Thailand from the end of 1940).[116]

Mass media was intensively used to promote the government's policies. The Public Relations Department, upgraded in 1940 from the Section of Public Relations, was founded to mobilise all media including newspapers and public radio. In 1941, Phibun issued the Royal Decree on Printing that authorised the Minister of Interior, Phibun himself, to have full control of all media (Ratchakitchanubeksa, Vol. 58, 30th September 1941: 1128-1257). As a result, the media staunchly responded to this health policy by publishing images of muscular men and women, interestingly most were of Westerners, to encourage people to strengthen their bodies. For example, the column *Sang Thai hai pen Maha Amnat duai Sukkhaphap Phaen Mai* [Creating the powerful Thailand through a new health regime] written by Sawat Tunthasut in *Si Krung* newspaper, showed a nude image of American musclemen and women (Fig. 42). The captions read, 'all young Thai men must develop this kind of physique, and we will become the world's most powerful country' and 'Thailand will become a powerful nation if Thai women have strong bodies like this' (Si Krung, 3rd November 1941: 9). The writer also stated that eating and living well were the "art of living" for the Thais in the age of the nation-building.

Another column on the same page provided a guidline entitled *Len klam baep saifalaep* [20 ways for speedy bodybuilding] for the readers to transform their bodies into the state's ideal body — the beautiful body or *song ngam* (15). The column was illustrated with the image of five American bodybuilders showing strong biceps and their measurements. As such, the muscular body of Westerners provided a catalyst for the aspired change of Thai society. These columns endorsed the concept of the ideal Thai body and its relationship to the glory of the nation according to the state's policy.

Together with the government's announcements and media advertisements, as mentioned previously, art had a crucial role in promoting the idea of the armoured body as the new mass aesthetic. It provided a visible language that helped narrate and materialise the People's Party's critique of the hierarchical old regime and therefore represented the elevation of the image of the commoner to the centre of the nation. The political culture after the overthrow of the monarchy thus appointed the muscular body of the commoner as the

[116] It should be noted that the entire visual culture of the wartime requires a more in-depth study. This thesis focuses only on artworks that related to the bodybuilding and its relation to the nation-building but does not discuss other war memorials and monuments such as Victory Monument (Anusaowari Chaisamoraphum, 1941), the Thai Bravery Monument (Anusaowari Wira Thai, 1952), the Bravery of the 8th December Monument (Anusaowari Wira Kam 8 Thanwakhom 2484, 1950) and the World War II Youth Volunteers Monument (Anusaowari Yuwa Chon Thahan, 1981).

new central concern of artistic practice. The art of the People's Party was therefore a form of symbiosis between art and politics that functioned in the construction, consolidation and persuasion of the new political ideology.

As a strong body and exaggerated muscles were the main characteristics of the revolutionary art, this chapter will argue that the politics of aesthetics and artistic style occurring in this period are closely tied with the body politic in relation to class struggle and nation-building. It proposes that the adoption of an exaggerated muscular body from Western art helped transform Thai attitudes towards art as well as the representation of the body in relation to nationalism. The next section will discuss the political motivation behind an adoption of heroic realism (Wong, 2006). It will investigate an institutionalisation of realism as a new aesthetic language and how it served as a catalyst for the development of the People's Party's official style that enabled them to propagate their political-national messages through works of art.

The Quest for Style

The Thai social classes were partly choreographed and performed through the depiction of the physical body in arts and literature. As stated in *Manussapatiwat*, the slender, frail and fragile body of the noble signified their superiority as they were so blessed that they did not have to do any hard work. The same discourse had a parallel in traditional art that represented the noble body as two-dimensional, flat and devoid of muscles (Fig. 43). The refined, slightly muscled physique in traditional painting connotes a certain social differentiation that subjugates the commoner as an inferior (Chaloempow Koanantakool, 1993). The commoner's body was projected as ugly, often ridiculous, crass and sinewy in comparison to the body of the noble which was refined, self-controlled, often emotionless, polished and slightly muscled (Fig. 44). As such, the image of the commoner in traditional art appears as a supplementary element with the sole purpose of augmenting the higher status of the nobility.

It should be noted that whereas frailness is associated in traditional painting with the physiological condition of the noble,[117] portraiture of the noble class had never existed in

[117] It should be remarked that there was a preference for muscularity among male nobles in the short period of Vajiravudh. The King, a suspected homosexual, replaced the tradition of having ladies-in-waiting with gentlemen-in-waiting in the inner court and was known as loving to be surrounded by male officials. For further study, see Yodhong, Chanan (2013) *"Nai Nai" samai ratchakan thi hok* [The gentlemen-in-waiting in the reign of King Rama XI], Bangkok: Matichon.

Siam before contact with the West in the reign of Mongkut in the 19th century. The fragile figures in traditional murals represented the nobles but did not serve as their portraits. Due to superstitious beliefs, portrait-making of a living person was believed to shorten the life of the model. The court's fascination with Western arts and culture brought an end to such prohibitions and European classicism became the new taste of the monarch, particularly during the time of Mongkut's successor Chulalongkorn (Poshyananda, 1994; Peleggi; 2002a; Kunavichayanont, 2002). Many palaces and noble houses were decorated with classical paintings, sculptures and portraits, either imported from Europe or created by European artists hired by the court.[118] Whereas these royal portraits, statues and monuments may have been a target of the People's Party's criticism of the body discourse of the noble, the presence of muscularity in a classical realist manner made them incapable of being a representation of the weakness and exploitative attitude of the high authority. Hence, the revolutionary instead denigrated traditional art because its painting conventions on the elite's body connoted superiority.

In relation to this denigration, the revolutionary had to seek a new artistic language to establish the official, state-sanctioned artistic style. There were at least two conditions involved in this quest. Firstly, the new style must be antithetical to the old one both in its formal elements and content. Secondly, it must serve as state propaganda, capable of promoting both the revolutionary's ideology and the proletariat's culture. This circumstance encouraged the adoption of foreign artistic styles for the more modern ideas, forms and practices: ones that differed from the classicism of the royal's taste. While the depiction of a strong body in Chinese and Western literature may provide a model for Thai writers, Western pictorial representation, especially realism in a heroic fashion such as social realism, became the appropriate new style.[119] Realism emerged as an aesthetic of the working class not only because it was easily accessible for the masses but also due to its capability in portraying their muscular bodies as a mark of honour.

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[118] For an intensive study of European art in the royal collection, see Poshyananda, Apinan (1994) *Ibid*.

[119] Although Wichit referred to Chinese literature admiringly, Thai artists never adopted Chinese art practices. Phibun's government imposed an anti-Chinese policy as part of the promotion of Thai nationalism and an alliance with the Japanese government. The anti-Chinese sentiment had been apparent long before 1932 with the influx of Chinese immigrants, the growth of the Chinese merchants and the fear of communism; Vajiravudh even called the Chinese in Siam "the Jews of the Orient" (1914). For further studies on the Thai relationship with China, see Chapter 6 'Official Nationalism and Imperialism' in Anderson, Benedict (1983) *Ibid.*; Murashima, Eiji (1996) *Kan mueang jin Siam: Kan khluean wai thang kan mueang khong chao jin phon thale nai prathet thai Ko. So. 1924-1941* [The Chinese-Thai politics: The political movement of the Chinese diaspora in Thailand 1924-1941], Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press and Sattayanurak, Saichon (2002) *Ibid*.

As such, the style of realism was institutionalised and became an expression of the revolutionary ideology, political belief and social class. The Marxist art historian, Frederick Antal (1966) demonstrated that an interrelation of form and content composed style and this style connected to the social, political and class contexts of a particular period. This means that style is not only a matter of visible elements or form of art but also an integral part of the content, which relates to the social group for which it is created in any particular circumstances. In the Thai case, heroic realism, both heroic and romantic, that identified physical perfection and musculature as features of an ideal body (Overy, 2005) corresponded with the change in Siam's social structure and ideology. Its indoctrination of nationalistic values of sacrifice, duty and devotion to the country perfectly fitted with the People's Party's constitution of the new cultural paradigm that centred on the working class and its capabilities as a working body.

One of the early works that shows the commoners' bodies in a heroic realist manner is Silpa Bhirasri's *The Six Principles* [*Lak Hok Prakan*] at Silpakorn Pavilion of the Annual Constitutional Fair in 1937 (Fig. 45). Bhirasri (formerly Corrado Feroci), an Italian sculptor who had been a state-hired sculptor since the time of Vajiravudh, the Sixth King of the Chakri dynasty, became an important art consultant to the People's Party government and obtained Thai citizenship in 1944.[120] Bhirasri, who was also the Director of the School of Fine Arts, Rongrian Pranit Sinlapakam (founded under the Fine Art Department in 1934)[121] created *The Six Principles* to represent the People's Party's "Six Principles": Independence, Security, Economic, Equality, Liberty and Education. The Announcement of the People's Party No. 1 declared on 24th June 1932 stated the Six Principles as goals of the revolution.

The actual sculpture did not survive but a photograph of *The Six Principles* displays relief images on two sides of a presumably hexagonal sculpture: a half-naked man in a traditional soldier's uniform and a woman in a traditional Thai wet-drapery costume. A man with a sword may signify the first principle "Independence", 'The government must securely maintain the independence of the country in all forms including political, judicial, and economic, etc.' or the second principle "Security", 'The government must maintain public

[120] Bhirasri's naturalisation was done in order to avoid being arrested by the Japanese army that occupied Siam at that time, since Italy had surrendered to the Allies during the Second World War; Luang Wichitwathakan took care of the change of his name and nationality to save him from the Japanese.

[121] Rongrian Pranit Sinlapakam was the first art school with a Western art education system but it was not the first art school in the country. The first was the Art Club (Samosorn Chang), founded in 1905 in the reign of Chulalongkorn which became Rongrian Poh Chang, the Arts and Crafts School in 1913 under the patronage of Vajiravudh. Rongrian Poh Chang was founded in order to revive traditional art. Some of the students who graduated from this school continued their studies at Rongrian Pranit Sinlapakam.

safety within the country and greatly reduce crimes'. A woman with a jewellery box may refer to the third principle "Economics", 'The government must improve the economic wellbeing of the people by the new government finding employment for all, and drawing up a national economic plan, not leaving the people to starve' (The People's Party, 1932). Both reliefs were figurative with exaggerated muscles giving the images of the strong bodies of the working class.

Bhirasri's *The Six Principles* was a manifestation of the People's Party's official art. Its highly socialist realist appearance contrasted sharply with his previous work from the pre-revolutionary period such as a statue of Vajiravudh (1925) (Fig. 46). Classical art, flourishing in Italy in the 1920s as part of the state-supported art and culture (Affron and Antliff, 1997), was rooted in his training at L'Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze (Poshyananda, 1992: 33). Since the royal taste in classicism had been firmly established since the time of Chulalongkorn, Bhirasri's skills enabled him to work as a sculptor in the Fine Art Department in the Siam under Vajiravudh. However, Bhirasri's work shifted in direction after 1932 from naturalism to social realism and, in some cases, fascism.[122] Bhirasri's *The Six Principles* that celebrated the working class clearly responded to the new government's bodybuilding policy. By displaying the images of the commoners as embodiments of the Six Principles, Bhirasri's work not only pictorialised the revolutionary's vow but also transformed it to be a civic duty, handing it over to the nation's members. *The Six Principles* constituted the new version of Thai nationalism that concerned the ordinary as centre and force of the nation's prosperity.

It is important to note that, even though Bhirasri's *The Six Principles* and other artwork from his students, which will be discussed further, focused on the heroism of workers through the depiction of the muscular body, classifying these works as social realism was problematic. While the Thai elites had been in fear of communism from USSR and connected Stalin's socialist ideology to the revolutionary, particularly to Banomyong,[123] there seemed to be no concrete evidence of the influence of socialist realism other than the resemblances in content and appearance of some of the artwork. The fact that Bhirasri, who was the key mediator between Thailand and the Western art world, was Italian makes the relation to Italian fascist art more appreciable. Prior to his service in Thailand, Bhirasri had designed war memorials for Mussolini's government such as *To Their Heroes Who Died for*

[122] Bhirasri's design for the sculptures at the bases of Democracy Monument (Anusaowari Prachathippatai, 1939) was harshly criticised as fascist. See for example, Poshyananda, Apinan (1992) *Ibid*. and Wright, Michael (1992) *Ibid*.
[123] See the discussion of the Boworadet Rebellion (1933) in Chapter 2.

the Country (1922) at Portoferraio [124] (Fig. 47). According to his daughter, Isabella Caligaris, Bhirasri quickly gained a reputation as a sculptor of war memorials that represented the morale and patriotism of the Italians, the propagandistic agenda stimulated by the fascist government (Poshyananda, 1992: 34).[125]

The transnational concept of heroic realism that was appropriated in relation to the dynamics of art and cultural changes during the People's Party's regime had portrayed the commoner's heroic body as an indication of class emancipation, a theme also commonly found in socialist realist art (Overy, 2005). Chatri Prakitnonthakan, a historian of architecture who was a pioneer in the studies of the art and architecture of the People's Party, stated that despite the Western appearance the art of the People's Party was a product of local circumstances (Prakitnonthakan, 2005). This chapter proposes to view the heroic realistic form (Wong, 2006) that appeared in the art of the People's Party as an outcome of an intercultural encounter. It argues that a strong connection to fascist art via Bhirasri created ambivalence in the art of the People's Party: a combination of a democratic, humanitarian concept of equality and the totalitarian artistic style that perceived art as an ideological weapon and means of power struggle (Golomstock, 1990). This ambivalence illustrates an argument made by John Clark, an Australian art historian who specialised in the studies of Asian modern art, that the differences from the original forms and discourses indicated the openness of discourses itself, the capability of being varyingly interpreted through local transformation (Clark 1993: 2-5). As such, the art of the People's Party appeared as a "mimicry", a hybridised form of modernity according to Homi K. Bhabha (1994) but functioned as the cultural hegemony that repressed the indigenous inferior (García Canclini, 1995): the defunct elite class.[126]

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[124] The fact that Bhirasri was a state artist of the fascist government and seemed to be enjoying his work in Italy is not well known among Thais. Partly it was because Poshyananda wrote his book in English. From Poshyananda's information, Michael Wright, an English writer who lived in Thailand, criticised Bhirasri's design of the bas-reliefs at the bases of Democracy Monument (Anusaowari Prachathippatai) as highly fascist. Wright wrote that he would like to believe that Bhirasri's decision to move to Siam was an escape from fascism, but the features of the bas-reliefs seem not to support such a thought. Although Wright's opinion contained a doubtful if not sarcastic tone, many Thais considered Bhirasri's departure for Thailand in 1923 as an escape from the dictatorial government of Mussolini. See Wright, Michael, *Ibid*. However, Wright's article was not influential. Bhirasri is praised as the Father of Thai Modern Art by the Thai state and Silpakorn writers continued to produce his biography in a hagiographical sense. Silpakorn University also organised a commemorative event on his birthday (15th September) every year. Example of these writings include N. Na Paknam (1992) *Ibid.* and Silpakorn University (1993) *Ibid*.

[125] For more discussion on art patronage under fascism in Italy, see Stone, Marla (1997) 'The State as Patron: Making Official Culture in Fascist Italy' in Affron, Matthew and Antliff, Mark (eds.) *Fascist Visions: Art and Ideology in France and Italy*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, p. 205 – 238.

[126] Homi K. Bhabha (1994) and Néstor García Canclini (1995) introduced the notion of hybridity in relation to Postcolonialism. While Bhabha explained hybridity as a form of colonial resistance, García Canclini stated that it was a form of hegemony constituted by the local dominating power over the indigenous others. Nevertheless,

Before moving to the next section it is important to highlight the foundation of Rongrian Pranit Sinlapakam in 1934 as the institution that generated the systematic art education. Under Bhirasri's supervision, the school curriculum followed that of the Italian academy, L'Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze, where he had studied and taught prior to his arrival in Thailand (Poshyananda, 1992: 33). Bhirasri (1938: 58) wrote that 'art is the heart and soul of the nation'; the aim of the art school was not only to preserve and continue traditional art practices but also, and more importantly, to create new art that responded to contemporary needs. He stressed that art would be revived and flourish under the government's patronage. Another writing regarding the establishment of Silpakorn University in 1962 also emphasised that, to meet the government's demands, it was essential for Thailand to produce a local "artist" to execute modern art works instead of hiring foreign artists as in the past (Bhirasri, 1960). As a result, the art school worked alongside other nation-building programmes and enabled the revolutionary government to get state artists who would produce art and cultural products according to its socio-political requirements.

At the beginning the school was informal and had only a small number of students. It changed its name to Rongrian Silpakorn in 1935 and was divided into three departments, the Department of Fine Arts, the Department of Industrial Arts and the Department of Music, and in 1943 was upgraded from Silpakorn to Silpakorn University. Bhirasri (1960) noted that it was uncommon to call the centre of art training a university. In his opinion, following European and American's traditions, the more appropriate terms should be "academy", "college" or "institute of art". However, he understood that in Thailand, university had the highest status among educational institutions.

After the upgrade, Phraya Anuman Ratchathon, the then-Director General of the Fine Arts Department, and Bhirasri had organised an art exhibition of the students' work to show the school's progress to the Prime Minister Phibun.[127] The Royal Decree on the

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both of them regarded modernisation in the non-West as the selective procedure of the indigenous, which created forms of modernity different from its origin. Hybridity in itself was therefore crucially a political process; it consisted of the process of reading, interpreting, selecting, rejecting and lastly appropriating according to diverse local authoritative agencies. See Bhabha, Homi K. (1994) *Ibid.* and García Canclini, Néstor (1995) *Ibid*. Today the concept of hybridity has been a key concept in cultural criticism and postcolonial studies, adding more vital and positive perspectives to the study of new cultural forms that emerged from interaction and exchange between ethnicities. The academic interest in hybridity has shifted cultural criticism from an essentialist-based dogma to see the process and product of the cross-cultural transfer as a subject of cultural exchange. See for example, Coombes, Annie E. and Brah, Avtar (2000) *Ibid*.

[127] Somsi Sukumonlanan, daughter of Phraya Anuman Ratchathon, recalled this story of her father told by Dhanit Yupho, the Director General of the Fine Arts Department between 1956 and 1968, in Sukumonlanan, Somsi (2006) *Pho: Phraya Anuman Ratchathon* [Father: Phraya Anuman Ratchathon], Bangkok: Sathirakoses-Nagapradipa Foundation. There is no further information on this exhibition except that it was briefly mentioned in this book and in Bhirasri's article about the foundation of Silpakorn University written in 1960.

establishment of Silpakorn University stipulated that the university was under the supervision of the Prime Minister, the Minister of Education, the Director General of the Fine Arts Department and no more than five appointed experts (Ratchakitchanubeksa, Vol. 60, No. 54, 12th October 1943: 1496-1506).

Khien Yimsiri, one of the early students wrote that the first generation of the four-year programme which graduated in March 1938 consisted of seven students: Chaem Khaomichue, Piman (Thongyen) Munpramuk, Sitthidet (Bunjua) Saenghiran, Fuea Hariphithak, Jongkon Kamjatrok, Sawat Chuenmana and Phuangthong Kraihong; but Jongkon Kamjatrok, the other student, asserted that there were actually 10 students including Mom Rajawongse Thanomsakdi Kridakon, Chaem Daengchomphu and Anujit Saengduean (Silpakorn University, 1993: 18). All of them became state artists working as lecturers at the art school and as Bhirasri's assistants. They were civil servants (*kha ratchakan*) working under the Fine Arts Department and produced artwork for the new political authority (Fig. 48). As a result, the students' works were inevitably products of state guidance and approval.

On one hand, the foundation of the art school paved the way for Thai people to learn art. In the past, there had been some court artisans, most of them from the elite class trained by foreign, mostly Italian, artists within the palace.[128] This was the first time that Thais were capable of making modern artwork such as sculptures, paintings and monuments, and of transferring skills and knowledge through the system of the Western art academy. On another hand, state-run art education established the official style and, to a degree, monopolised the practice of artistic creation which slowly grew into a form of cultural hegemony. This aspect is reflected in a comment from the public sector regarding the winner of the art competition in the 1939 Annual Constitution Fair. Mr. Choei, a man from Ban Bat District sent a letter to the Fine Art Department to complain that its civil servants should not submit the works to the competition, as they were more skilful than that of an ordinary man.[129] For Mr. Choei, this caused unfair conditions but, more importantly, it suggested that the Fine Art Department, as the ideological organ for the management of art and culture, dominated the entire world of artistic production.

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[128] Prince Naris, brother of Chulalongkorn, collaborated with the Italian painter, Carlo Rigoli to paint frescoes at Borom Phiman Mansion, Rajathiwad Temple and Chetupon Temple. There were also some of court artists studied in Europe such as Phra Soralaklikhit studied painting at the Academy in Rome and lived there for more than 30 years before returning to Siam or Khun Patiphakpimlikhit studied and worked in England, he came back to teach at Poh Chang and was the one to introduce Impressionism. See Poshyananda, Apinan (1994) *Ibid*.

[129] For a copy of the letter and the response from Phraya Anuman Ratchathon, see NAT: Ministry of Education: ME0701.23.2/32: *A plea to the Fine Arts Department not to accept the civil servants' artworks in the competition in the Annual Constitutional Fair,* 30th September 1939.

In conclusion, the new phase of modern art in Thailand began with the full mechanism of state art with the appropriate choice of aesthetic language. A new stylistic tradition was decisively formulated and developed by the state's institution, the Silpakorn art school under the Fine Art Department. Hence, the rise of the new style appropriated from foreign culture was in conflict with the previous one and therefore engaged directly with the specific social and political factors of the revolutionary cultural politics (Prakitnonthakan, 2005; 2009). As a progressive aesthetic, the armoured body in the heroic realist fashion was inevitably a critical instrument in the class struggle and politics of the post-1932 period because it both undermined the cultural meaning associated with the traditional pre-revolutionary thoughts, and inculcated a new idea of the new Thai self. An inflexible and muscular imagery of heroic realism made the art of the People's Party a new art with new aesthetics, new moral-political ideology and a new mode of nationalism. In terms of class politics, it expressed the rise of the commoner as the powerful force of the nation. Hence, the body politics and the politics of artistic style are intertwined in the art of the People's Party.

In relation to state propaganda, the three-dimensionality of sculpture makes it a suitable medium for body representation and therefore the most perceptible form for the public gaze (Outram, 1994: 130-131). The following section will aim to show how the sculptures in the Annual Constitutional Fairs between 1937 and 1938 celebrated the body of the working class and inspired their patriotic love. It will also explore the complex interrelation of art and the People's Party's ideology. These sculptures are not only carriers of new cultural forms and new modes of aesthetics perception but are also a mechanism of the state's promotion of ideological and cultural precepts.

The Robust Body: The Images of the Nation's Progress

The book *Ngan khong Krom Silpakorn* (Works of the Fine Arts Department) edited by Wichit in 1935 emphasised the importance of arts as a means to achieve the state of civilisation. Wichit quoted the speech of Pridi Banomyong made in a meeting with provincial governors on 7th June 1935. Banomyong, the then-Minister of Foreign Affairs, stated that art was 'an essential part of the nation, because a nation's art is an instrument in persuading citizens to love and take pride in their nation' and also 'an important factor in gaining respect from other nations; it manifests Thailand not as barbarous, but as civilised and cultured' (Wichit, 1935: 3).

Banomyong's speech shows two significant roles for the arts at the heart of the People's Party's idea of modernity-related nationalism. Firstly, its potential in being an effective tool for a programme of nationalistic propaganda, and secondly, as a marker of Thailand's civilisation as equal to other countries since 'the more our national art gets exposed internationally, the more respect we would acquire from others' (Ibid). As such, the arts had both domestic and international roles and these roles were intertwined since the "civilised" arts are "our" national heritage to take pride in and to proudly showcase to "others". Thus the regime could say: "we" are equal to "them". Consequently, Banomyong's 1935 statement was realised through the organisation of the art competition in the Annual Constitutional Fairs.

> In the past, art making was purely made for the sake of the art, that is, only for its beauty and aesthetic pleasure. …However, the past 20 years have seen the transformation of this attitude in every nation particularly those governed in the newest fashion, which considered art as the most important tool to promote nationalism and civic duty, as well as to educate citizens in the matter of current political system, and the nation's economy (Wichit, 1938).[130]

Wichit's speech given at the 1938 Annual Constitutional Fair, the second year of the art competition, suggested that high social values were placed on visual arts. The message clearly stated that art was a sufficient means in building the nation and constructing nationalistic sensibilities among the members of the nation. As the representation of the human body in the Annual Constitutional Fairs has lain at the heart of political culture, this section will examine how the muscular imagery in the sculptures in the Annual Constitutional Fairs were inscribed with propaganda messages intended for the public to read, interpret, decipher and act accordingly. As an educative tool these sculptures exemplified and reinforced ideas of civic virtues in relation to proletarian culture. This section will argue that the politics of constituting a new socio-political ideology and ideas of the citizen relating to the nation-building was inculcated partly on the aesthetic terrain.

To celebrate the granting of the first constitution (1932), the People's Party organised the Annual Constitutional Fair on 10th December every year. The festivity often lasted up to two weeks and featured myriad activities from the ceremonial oath-taking, official government pronouncements and various other forms of entertainment such as a beauty pageant, stage drama, concerts and an art competition. The Annual Constitutional Fair

[130] NAT: Ministry of Education: ME0701.23.2/26: *Lecture of the Department of Fine Arts in the Annual Constitutional Fair,* 13th December 1938 (distributed via public radio).

was also an occasion for the government to promote constitutionalism and their Six Principles. The pavilions and shops in the fairs were all decorated with replicas of *phan ratthathammanun* and/or symbolic elements that referred to the Six Principles (Parkitnonthakan, 2005). Although the first edition of the fair was organised in 1932, the art competition was not instigated until 1937 (Fig. 49) after Bhirasri had suggested to Wichit to provide an opportunity for art students to show their work (Poshyananda, 1992: 35).[131] Bhirasri also presented his works along with the students.

As previously mentioned, many pieces of art from the fairs did not survive but photographs preserved in the National Archives of Thailand served as visual archives that contained images of both the artworks and atmosphere of the fairs (Fig. 50, 51, 52). The Annual Constitution Fair of 1937 and 1938 took place between 8th and 14th December at the Royal Garden of Saranrom Palace which was the House of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs near the Grand Palace and Sanam Luang. The institutional control led to the invention of art competition and the first one sought submissions of painting, sculpture (in the round and relief), photography, print publication and figurines. Painters and sculptors were invited to contribute work on the themes of the Six Principles or constitutionalism.[132] The art competition was met with great interest from students of both Rongrian Poh Chang[133] and Rongrian Silpakorn. Wiroon Tangchareon, an art teacher and writer, recalled that all students were enthusiastic to submit their work to the art competitions (Tangcharoen, 1991: 98). Phaithun Mueangsombun, the National Artist (Sculpture) of 1986, also remembered that in 1937 and 1938, while he was a student at Rongrian Poh Chang, he and his friends wanted to submit their work because everyone who did so would be awarded a commemorative coin (Thongpan, 1992: 108).[134]

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[131] The last art competition was organised in 1941. The fair began to fade from popularity as Thailand entered the Second World War. The art competition in the Annual Constitution Fair is considered to be the origin of the National Art Competition started in 1949. See Thongpan, Saran (1992) 'Sinlapakam haeng (Khana) rat. Kan prakuat pranit sinlapakam nai ngan chalong ratthathammanun Pho. So. 2480' [The Art of the People's Party. The Art Competition of the Annual Constitutional Fair of 1937] *Mueang Boran*, Vol. 4 No. 1 (January–March 1992), pp. 98-107 and Prakitnonthakan, Chatri (2005) *Ibid*.

[132] The photography competition focused on the beauty of the natural and/or urban landscapes of Thailand, while the print publication competition awarded prizes to the best printing design and the best doll in Thai traditional costume. See more details of the competition with a list of jurors in NAT: Ministry of Education: ME0701.23.2/16: *The announcement of the art exhibition in the Annual Constitutional Fair B.E. 2480*.

[133] Inta Siringam and Phio Thimsa, two students from Rongrean Poh Chang won the first prizes in painting and sculpture in the round of 1937. The list of winners can be found in Thongpan, Saran (1992) *Ibid*.

[134] Despite the amount of artwork exhibited in the fairs, only a few of them remain today. It is possible that some works may have been destroyed during the Second World War bombing in Bangkok. Moreover, there is no evidence of a public or a private collection during that time. Neither is it known whether the government bought this work. The remaining works can be found at the Hall of Sculpture at the Fine Arts Department and the National Gallery.

Figurative sculpture was the most popular form. One of Bhirasri's pupils, Jongkon Kamjatrok, presented a muscular male nude entitled *Cultivation* [*Khwaum Jaroen*] (Fig. 53). By showing proportions and surface anatomy, this sculpture of a standing naked man accentuated the muscles in a realist fashion rather than avoiding it as in the traditional art. Wearing no clothes to identify his occupation, his body with simplified masses can be seen as a metaphor and a personification of the nation's progress as it illustrated the new narrative and representation of the ideal citizen: the strong and healthy commoner who is ready to work for the nation. The transformation of the notion of "*khwaum jaroen*" (cultivation or progress) into a human form has integrated human bodies with the abstract idea of the nation and in return, concretised the concept of the ordinary citizen as the centre of the nation. The gesture of looking up to the sky signified an ambition and a will to achieve prosperity which, in accordance with the People's Party's popular discourse of "*khwaum jaroen*", was a discourse relating to the concept of civilisation after the European model. This act stressed that the nation's progress is the national goal, a form of the future imagined community.

Other sculptures indicated that the ideological concept of national progress associated deeply with proletarian culture. Sitthidet (Boonjua) Saenghiran submitted a sculpture of a muscular man wearing a loincloth entitled *Economics* [*Luk Setthakit*], the third principle of the People's Party's Six Principles (Fig. 54). The title of the work and the act of carrying a bamboo-woven fish basket on the shoulder suggested that the Thai economy was grounded in the peasant's working life. The wet-drapery style loincloth did not conceal the parts of the body underneath but rather underlined its contours for the viewer's gaze. Phallicism in relation to fertility cult has long existed in the region of Southeast Asia (Wongthes, 2006) and was displayed in various forms of cultural objects including ritual objects and arts and crafts (Eosiwong, 1995). *Economics* continued such a tradition but synthesised it with the modern sculptural practices to make its phallus, the symbol of fertility, more realistic and noticeable. This ordinary fisherman achieved a transformation and became a modern symbol of the nation's prosperity.

The same theme appeared in Jongkon Kamjatrok's *Agriculture* [*Kasikam*], the second piece that he submitted in 1937 (Fig. 55). *Agriculture* was a bust of a robust Thai woman, presumably a peasant. She covered her full and fleshy breasts with *tabengman*, a piece of fabric wrapped across the breasts and tied behind the nape, but it did not appear as a foil for

nudity. Although she was not completely naked as with her male counterparts,[135] the wet-drapery *tabengman* emphasised her physicality and her nipples were clearly visible. She also had fruit and vegetables hanging around her waist, one of them in the position of the sex organ. This female peasant was not portrayed as slim but healthy and strong.

Similar features can be found in Chaem Khaomichue, *Maephosop* submitted in the following year for the Annual Constitution Fair of 1938 (Fig. 56). *Maephosop* is the goddess of rice which is the staple food element in Thai cuisine. Thai people believe that paying homage to *Maephosop* would please her and ensure a successful harvest. This sculpture of *Maephosop* presented the goddess in a traditional costume with full jewellery and hairpiece. She is standing, or floating, on a pedestal formed of rice grains and holds a rice sheaf in her hands. Although not naked her dress is close-fitting and accents her physicality. *Maephosop* reveals that the art of the People's Party did not entirely reject the tradition but rather modified it into a modern form. Both *Agriculture* and *Maephosop* depicted an image of feminine perfection according to the People's Party's concept of the ideal Thai; their muscular and strong bodies with full breasts and hips not only made them sexually attractive but also suggested the stage of fertility. Here, feminine fertility has a twofold meaning; first it implies childbearing capacities and, second, it is a metaphor for agricultural fruitfulness.

It is notable that *Economics, Agriculture* and *Maephosop* represented the peasants and fertility cult, the local beliefs that related to peasant culture. As the backbone of Thai society and force of the nation's welfare, the sculptors depicted their strengths through an emphasis of muscular physicality, creating a projection of an ideal body-type in a cold academic manner, stark, heroic and seemingly devoid of emotion. These sculptures responded to the government's promise in the Third Principle that, '[the government] must improve the economic well-being of the people by the new government finding employment for all, and drawing up a national economic plan and not leaving the people to go hungry' (The People's Party, 1932).

Besides the peasantry themes, the depiction of the robust body in the sculptures in the Annual Constitution Fair of 1937 engaged with war and civic duty. Sanan Silakon's sculpture of a running soldier carrying a rifle won the second prize in sculpture in the round (Fig. 57).[136] Silakorn's work demonstrated the artist's skill in depicting the moving action of

[135] The representation of the female nude was not found during the People's Party period. The first of this kind could be Sawaeng Songmangmi's *Bloom* and Jamrat Kiatkong's *Nude* in 1949.
[136] Silakon's sculpture became a model for the Wira Thai Monument Pho. So. 2484 (Thai Hero Monument B. E. 2484) in Nakhon Si Thammarat. The Wira Thai Monument Pho. So. 2484 was unveiled in 1949. See The

the soldier running at full speed and balancing on only one foot. His facial expression shows courage and determination as he reaches his opponent. Similar sensations were found in Piman Munpramuk's *Warrior*, a sculpture of a muscular male nude that was submitted the same year (Fig. 58). The man contracts his stomach, his chest swelling, revealing prominent muscles and in the ready position to throw a bomb with his right hand at an invisible enemy. Despite appearing naked, a pile of military uniforms and a helmet on the ground beside him as well as a shell bomb in his left hand reveal his identity as a soldier.

The Annual Constitution Fair of 1937 had at least three sculptures of a soldier in heroic action: Bhirasri's *The Six Principles,* Silakon's soldier carrying a rifle and Munpramuk's *Warrior*. The theme the warrior continued in 1938 as Chaem Khaomichue submitted *The Archer* (Fig. 59). This male nude figure was a study of human anatomy from Western sculptures that Khaomeecheu could have modelled after the art books Bhirasri brought from Europe to teach his students (Pongrapeeporn, 1993: 83). Manifestly emphasising human flesh and muscles, the model of this sculpture was probably *Hercules Killing the Birds of Lake Stymphalis* (1909) a bronze work of the French artist Emile Antoine Bourdelle (Fig. 60). The great success of *Hercules Killing the Birds of Lake Stymphalis* led to the distribution of copies across Europe, one of them was given to the gallery of Modern Art in Rome in 1920.

Bourdelle took his subject from Greek mythology, specifically Hercules's fifth labour of killing the monstrous birds of Lake Stymphalis, but Khaomeecheu's sculpture presented an anonymous man but with the same remarkable balanced construction and dynamic of gestures: the taut, tense muscles were accentuated by the act of archery with the arm bending the bow and the foot bracing against the rock. While *Hercules Killing the Birds of Lake Stymphalis* exaggerated the musculature by using rippled surfaces, *The Archer* was executed in a more realistic manner with evidence of underlying muscles and bones. Khaomeechu's sculpture revealed the aim to master Western sculptural practices of executing the human body form as well as the desire to proclaim such a body as the ideal body of the citizen of the Thai state. These features express the search for a new artistic expression in the beginning of Thailand's modern art practices. These cultural cross-pollinated forms may be seen as an analogy of the desired-yet-unachievable fantasy of bulking a muscular body like Westerners and thus becoming a powerful state like theirs.

Fine Art Department (1998) *Anusaowari nai Prathet Thai Vol. 2* [Monuments in Thailand Vol. 2], Literature and History Division, Bangkok: The Fine Art Department, p. 430-433.

The theme of defending the nation may represent the principle of "Independence" or "Security" from the People's Party's "Six Principles"; the fact that the Thai government had started an alliance with the Japanese army in 1937 had pushed forward the People's Party's nationalism to a more militaristic and imperialist bent. The Sydney Morning Herald (19th November 1937: 11) expressed Western concerns about the influence of the "Hitlerian doctrines" and its alliance with the Japanese army as a threat in Indo-China. As such, the promotion of nationalism through the image of the common soldier's armoured body engaged with not only the internal issues of class struggle but also the external issues of international relations. With the wartime coming, the exaggeration of musculature in these sculptures was indirectly antithetical to the muscle-less body of the noble in traditional art. By raising the common soldier as the centre of defending the nation, the warrior sculptures in the Annual Constitution Fairs attacked the weakness of the noble, both the weakness of the physical body and the weakness in its position as national leaders.

Here the analysis of the body images reveals the crucial role of body representation in shaping the social and political understanding (Outram, 1994). Seeing art as a propagating tool for the cultural nationalist programme (Prakitnonthakan, 2009), the government's promotion of arts was deepened in Phibun's regime as the government announced that visiting art exhibitions should be one of the activities of the good Thai citizen. The 11th Ratthaniyom issued in 1941 encouraged Thai citizens to spend their spare time educating themselves by visiting art exhibitions (Ratchakitchanubeksa, Vol. 58, 8th September 1941: 1132-1133). The 11th Cultural Mandate mentioned that visiting art exhibitions was a good activity on a par with exercising to shape the strong body. Furthermore, in 1942 Phibun established the National Council for Culture and moved the Department of Fine Arts to work under the direct supervision of the Prime Minister's Office. It was notable that art was given a prominent place in the public ceremony.

In the People's Party's era of representation, the sculptures submitted to the competitions in the Annual Constitution Fairs intended to be acts of reform. They visualised and evoked the essence of the new political paradigm whilst demolishing the old concept of hierarchical social gradation practiced by the previous absolute monarchy regime. As the competition aimed to increase public awareness of the People's Party's ideology, these sculptures were operations of power and discourse, a performative re-modelling of the body (Scholz, 2000) and therefore, essentially, pedagogical bodies. They were the instruments through which the government promoted new ideologies and values to the Thais, informing and instructing them about what they should do for the country. Thus, the strong body

appeared as firstly, a critique of the monarchy and traditional class structure and secondly, a device to evoke nationalistic feelings in relation to the idea of national progress by the hands of the healthy citizen. This, in return, performs a double subversion to the monarchy's superiority by pointing at its inability, as having a fragile body, to make the nation's progress. These sculptures answered a call made earlier in the policy of the Fine Art Department that the department would operate the national project through the arts by putting forth 'every effort to assist the government in this matter, namely organising lectures and debates, art competitions, as well as theatrical and music performances in order to persuade citizens to participate in and dedicate to art as much as possible' (NAT: Ministry of Education: ME0701.9.1/2 [6]).

Similar to art in the totalitarian system,[137] artists of this period employed Western heroic realism to create artwork that promoted and supported the state's ideology and new goals in leading the nation towards modernity and civilisation. In the context of the post-1932 years, art became a critical tool for attacking the old hierarchical regime and tradition, and an instructive instrument for educating Thai people. As a form of state mechanism, it re-defines social relationships, introducing new rules and strengthening values. Art patronage under the People's Party superimposed Western heroic realism for the purpose of both internal and external affairs. With the relatively modern style, concept, material and technique, the art of the People's Party only looks Western in appearance but was in fact a local product. However, this local artistic product is a hybrid form, a mode of non-Western modernity in art that is a result of a cross-cultural appropriation that the local employed from the outside (Clark, 1993). As style arose at socially and politically progressive historical moments (Antal, 1966), this hybrid art, highly emphasising muscularity as never happened before in Thai art practice, aimed at serving the new revolutionary government. By criticising the noble and re-evaluating the commoner, the sculptures in the Annual Constitution Fairs offered a visualisation, an invention and a concrete form that provided a mould of the ideal body, the model of a perfect citizen. It is an embodiment of the revolutionary's ideology that was rooted in proletarian culture as it changed the image of the working class and elevated them to be the new content of art. Heroic realism is characteristic for the aesthetics of the revolutionary because the politics of the body could be fully operated

[137] For an intensive study of totalitarian art, please see a comparative study of Socialist realism, Italian Fascism, Nazi art and art in China in Golomstock, Igor (1990) *Totalitarian Art in the Soviet Union, the Third Reich, Fascist Italy and the People's Republic of China*, translated from the Russian by Robert Chandler, London: Collins Harvill.

through this form. It is a form that functions in both critiquing the past and championing the present.

However, the fall of the People's Party in 1947 led to the degeneration of their arts. Heroic realism was not only discontinued, but also discredited and devaluated as "bad art", "bad taste", and "non-Thai": the ugly alien of Thai society (Pramoj, 1985). The next chapter will focus on the counter-strike and the re-installation of monarchical power through the appropriation of the People's Party's cultural legacy. The rehabilitation of Prajadhipok's image as the Father of Thai Democracy was one of the most demonstrative signs of the return of the Thai monarchy in politics. Chapter four will explore the alteration of meaning of the image of Prajadhipok in the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony of 10th December 1932 and the construction of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok at the National Assembly in relation to the political and social transformation project of post-1947.

Chapter 4

The Praxis of Memory: The Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok

> I am willing to surrender the powers I formerly exercised to the people as a whole, but I am not willing to turn them over to any individual or any group to use in an autocratic manner without hearing the voice of the people (Prajadhipok, 1935).

The quotation above is part of Prajadhipok's abdication letter written during his exile in England in 1935. It was inscribed at the base of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok at the National Assembly in Bangkok (Fig. 61). The statue adopted the King's image in the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony on 10th December 1932 (Fig. 6). More than 40 years after having been edged out of power and dying abroad, the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok was unveiled on 10th December 1980 to celebrate the exiled King as the Father of Thai democracy. This chapter proposes to consider the appropriation of the King's image by the Thai state in the post-People's Party period as the core of the master narrative of the birth of democracy in Thailand. By focusing on the formation of the new political identity of Prajadhipok it seeks to argue that his Royal Statue stands as a symbol of neo-royalism that combines democracy with anti-communism.[138]

The collapse of the People's Party regime by the military coup in 1947 led to the revivification and modification of the monarchy's role in Thai politics (Kongkirati, 2005; Yimprasoet, 2010; Chaiching, 2013). With the support of the military, Phibun assumed his second premiership (1948-1957)[139] and became allied himself with the monarch.[140]

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[138] Chinese immigrants, known as the Chinese Communist Party of Thailand (CCPT) introduced communism to Thailand in the 1920s. The party was integrated with the Vietnamese communists in the northeast of the country in 1930 under Ho Chi Minh. It later changed its name to the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) with inclusion of many Thai intellectuals and politicians. In 1946, Banomyong's government abrogated the Anti-Communist Act of 1933 but the military coup in 1949 restored the Act. The CPT turned into an underground movement. For a study of the communist movement in Thailand, see for example, Tejapira, Kasian (2001) *Commodifying Marxism: The Formation of Modern Thai Radical Culture, 1927-1958*, Kyoto Area Studies on Asia, Vol. 3, Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press and Murashima, Eiji (2012) *Kamneot phak communist Siam* [The origin of the Communist Party of Siam], trans. Thipthiempong, Kosit, Bangkok: Matichon.

[139] When the end of the Second World War brought down the militaristic regime of Phibun, Banomyong, head of Seri Thai (Free Thai Movement), the anti-Japanese underground network and regent to the young King Ananda became the new Prime Minister. The government compromised with the royalists by issuing a decree on pardoning the Boworadet Rebellion prisoners (1933) and other cases but the unexpected death of Ananda on 9th June 1946 led to the fall of the People's Party's liberal wing. Prachathipat Party, a new conservative-royalist party led by Khuang Aphaiwong, Mom Rajawongse Seni Pramoj and Mom Rajawongse Kukrit Pramoj had spread the rumour that Banomyong and his supporters had assassinated the King to establish the republic. Rear Admiral Thawan Thamrong Nawasawat replaced Banomyong but was ousted by the 1947 coup. Banomyong fled the country but secretly returned in 1949 in a failed attempt to stage a coup against Phibun. Banomyong fled again and never returned, dying in France in 1983.

[140] Bhumibol was not in the country in 1947. After his ascension in 1946, Bhumibol, aged 19, went back to study in Switzerland. Prince Rangsit, the Prince Regent and uncle of the King authorised the coup. Bhumibol

Consequently, royalism emerged as a hegemonic ideology as well as a frame of interpretation for writing Thai history (Winichakul, 2001). However, internal dynamism was not the only key factor that permitted the development of royalism (Chaloemtiarana, 1979; Connors, 2007). In fact, the rise of communism in the region and the American intervention in Thailand during the Cold War (1950s-1980s) played a major role in rehabilitating the monarchy (Anderson, 1977; Bowie, 1997; Chaiching, 2013). Phibun's government officially announced its alliance with the US in 1951, leading to a long tradition of American support for the Thai military regimes. As a result, Thailand became a centre of security operations and base for US psychological warfare. By 1954, the US operation considered King Bhumibol a symbol of social stability and therefore a weapon in fighting communism, the same view shared by Thai royalists (Kesboonchoo Mead, 2012: 217-218).

In the realm of cultural politics, the Thai state of the post-People's Party period brought back classical realism, a royal aesthetic preference since the time of Chulalongkorn, to replace the People's Party's heroic realism as the new official artistic style. The fact that the Fine Art Department, the institution that was developed under the revolutionary government, had turned to serve the royal institutions indicated the counter-revolutionary attempts in artistic practice. The sculptors from the Fine Art Department, Saroj Jarak, Sanan Silakon and Pratuang Thammarak designed and built the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok in a contrasting style to the revolutionary sculptures described in the previous chapter. The classical body of Prajadhipok depicted in the royal statue revealed that the official Thai artistic style had changed according to the new political power.

Through an examination of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok, this chapter will also unfold the performativity of Prajadhipok's image from the 10th December ceremony in 1932. The image of the King granting the constitution served as a symbol of political ideologies acting in the political competition between constitutionalism and royalism. In two different periods, his image has constituted two contradictory interpretative paradigms concerning the transformation of the Thai political system from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy under parliamentary democracy.

Whereas Chapter 1 explored the performativity of the King's image in legitimising the People's Party's Constitution in 1932, Chapter 4 will explicate how the re-contextualisation of the same image recast the People's Party as the villain in Thailand's

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came back for a short time for the Coronation Ceremony in 1949 and has resided permanently in Thailand since 1950. The relationship between the King and Phibun was strained, which subsequently made the latter lose support from the USA. Phibun was finally toppled by a coup in 1957.

democratic development as a consequence of the change of power in 1947. This chapter aims to discuss the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok as a site through which memories are produced, shared and given meaning (Sturken, 1997; Koureas, 2007). It is an object of competitive struggle in the construction of collective-cultural memory (Halbwachs, 1992; Assmann, 1995) within the field of the neo-royalist cultural production. The argument is set in the context of how internal politics of the post-People Party era and international situation of the communist expansion in Southeast Asia informed the construction of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok.

As part of a larger project of the promotion of the monarchy during the Cold War, the resurgence of Prajadhipok was situated at the intersection of domestic politics and international ideological tension. Two political crises in the 1970s, the 14th October Incident (1973) and the 6th October Massacre (1979), which will be elaborated on later, were essential in empowering the monarchy in relation to communist resistance. In this specific circumstance, Prajadhipok's image (1932) and his abdication message (1935) were used to reconstruct a new historical discourse on Thailand's political transformation towards democracy. As national consciousness and identity are bound to a historical dimension (Nora, 1999), the past thus becomes a realm of cultural politics in which memory appears to be a space for political battle. This particular political situation was suitable for an emergence of a new interpretive paradigm towards Prajadhipok. His image from the 1932 ceremony provided a fertile ground for such historical manipulation, emphasising memory as a tensional interplay between the "imagined" and the "happened" (Radstone, 2000) which indicated a 'dialectic relationship between the imaginary and the real' (Samuel, 2012: 246).

The construction of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok provided a chance to observe a relationship between material object and collective memory[141] in the process of constructing a consensual memory (Heidegger, 1962; Forty and Küchler, 1999).[142] In the

[141] The Greek philosopher Aristotle formulated the idea of memory as tied with image/material object and it continued in the Western tradition of memory throughout the Renaissance. See Aristotle (1972) *De Memoria et Reminicentia*, 450b11, translated by Richard Sorabji, *Aristotle on Memory*, London: Duckworth. Sigmund Freud's theory of mental process raised questions to the notion of material object as analogue of human memory as Freud distinguished the mental process of forgetting from physical decay. See Freud, Sigmund (1963) *Civilization and its Discontents*, translated by James Strachey, London: Hogarth Press. Freud's inversion of Aristotle's model of memory led to a consideration of the relationship between memory and material object in a less straightforward way. See for example Bachelard, Gaston (1969) *The Poetics of Space*, Boston, Mass: Beacon Press and Certeau, Michel de (1984) *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Los Angeles, Berkeley: University of California Press.

[142] Remembering and forgetting are inseparable modes in the process of constructing an appropriate memory. Whereas the study of memory has been intensively operated since 1970s, the topic of forgetting and collective oblivion received academic interest in the late 1980s. See for example, Casey, Edward S. (1987) *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press; Lowenthal, David (1993)

light of the counter-revolution, Prajadhipok's image no longer acted as a commemorative artefact that preserved the memory of the 1932 Revolution but as an agent of forgetting (Levine, 2006), implying that the act of representation was also an act of suppression. The following section presents the context of the post-1947 period in relation to the rehabilitation of Prajadhipok and the devaluation of the People's Party. It will explain how an appropriation of Prajadhipok's image to the royal statue enacted the transformation of the People's Party and expelled the 1932 Revolution as an unwanted memory whilst promoting the monarchy as the origin of democracy.

From the Last Absolutist King to the Democratic Minded Ruler

The intense ideological struggle of the post-1947 period is best manifested through the formation of a new cultural memory (Assmann, 1995) that reanimated Prajadhipok as the Father of Thai Democracy. The revival of royalism by royalist scholars and writers perfectly demonstrated that memory was a symbol of the struggle for power and the desire to control the past in favour of the present (Connerton, 1989; Nora, 1999; Bal, 1999). To revive the power of the monarchy in social and political matters, it was necessary to recast the People's Party's revolution and all its legacies as entirely wrong and illegitimate. In 1948, Lui Kiriwat, the former editor of *Krung Thep Deli Mail* newspaper and a political prisoner from the Boworadet Rebellion criticised the People's Party regime as a pseudo-democratic regime. He also insulted the 1932 Revolution as a deceitful action performed under the leadership of 'a pig in a lion's skin' (meaning Phahon, the People's Party leader) (Kiriwat, 1948: 153-54, 229 and 367 in Chaiching, 2013: 181, 184-85).

The parallel story of the royalist effort was the revivification of the monarchy's power and vulnerability. Nai Honhuai (Sinlapachai Chanchaloem), the famous documentary writer who wrote heatedly about Thai history and politics, published *Chaofa Prajadhipok* [Prince Prajadhipok] and *Rachan Phu Nirat* [The Exiled King], a biography of Prajadhipok in 1949.[143] Nai Honhuai assessed Prajadhipok as a figure of nobility and the embodiment of democracy, the 'democratic gentleman', as a reflection of his growing up and subsequent education in England, a place that had long been considered as the model of democracy and

'Memory and Oblivion' *Museum Management and Curatorship*, Vol. 12, Issue 2, pp. 171-182; Geary, Patrick J. (1995) *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium*, Princeton: Princeton University Press; Henderson, John (1999) and Forty, Adrian and Küchler, Susanne (eds.) (1999).

[143] Prajadhipok's biography by Nai Honhuai first appeared in a daily newspaper *Seriphap* in 1948. The two volumes were combined into *Chaofa Prajadhipok: Rachan Phu Nirat* [Prince Prajadhipok: The exiled king] in 1952.

modern civilisation. In contrast, he refered to Prince Paribatra Sukhumbhand, a Privy Councilor to the King's accused of the People's Party members as 'the naïve, inexperienced boys' (Nai Honhuai, 1987: 268). From his perspective, the People's Party's knowledge of democracy and political maturity was compared negatively to that of Prajadhipok who was, in his words, a 'democratic king' (279).

Prajadhipok's image as a democratic king was emphasised by the story about the King's secret plan to reform the Thai political system. Phraya Siwisanwaja (Thianliang or Siwisan Huntrakun), the Oxford graduate and lawyer, wrote in an article *The Revolution of 1932* (1964)[144] that the People's Party had interrupted the King's secret plans for political reform.[145] This interruption was later described as an "early ripe, early rotten" action in *Sat kan mueang* [Political animal] (1973) written by the royalist intellectual Chai-Anan Samudavanija. The notion of "early ripe, early rotten" became the dominant discourse in the studies and critiques of Thai politics and history (Kongkirati, 2005: 500). Prajadhipok as the Father of Democracy and the People's Party's Revolution as the "early ripe, early rotten" are two sides of the same process in recreating the monarchy's vulnerability and the mass collective incorrect recollection of the People's Party's memory.

In this light, the 1947 coup was a turning point that, not only revived the monarchy's power in constitutional politics, but also created a "hybrid regime", a combination of royalism and democracy (Chaiching, 2013: 137). The new concept of "parliamentary democracy with the King as the Head of the State" in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, B.E. 2492 (Ratchakitchanubeksa, Vol. 17, Special Episode 66, 23rd March 1949: 1-80), was formulated by the conservative-royalist force led by the Prachathipat Party (Democrat Party) and best exemplified Thai democracy in the post-1947 era.[146] This

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[144] Phraya Siwisanwaja wrote *The Revolution of 1932* in English to be published in the government publication *Thailand Official Year Book* in 1964. The article was re-printed in his cremation volume. See *The Cremation Volume of Colonel Phraya Siwisanwaja*, Thepsirin Temple, 8th June 1968, Phra Nakhon: Thepsriharis, p. 119-25.

[145] No evidence about such a secret plan was found until the opening of the National Archives in 1976. By that time, the two documents that the counter-revolutionaries claimed to be Prajadhipok's drafts of constitution emerged: Francis B. Sayre's *Outline of Preliminary Draft* (1926) and Raymond B. Stevens and Phraya Siwisanwaja's *An Outline of Changes in the Form of Government* (1931). Despite the pro-monarchy argument that identified these historical documents as drafts of a democratic constitution, the King appeared to be the supreme ruling authority in both documents. See Chaiching, Nattapoll (2013), *Ibid*, p. 137-140.

[146] The Thai historian, Somsak Jeamteerasakul remarked that the concept of "parliamentary democracy *with* the King as the Head of the State" reflected the tension between political powers as it contained antithetical aspects: Western democracy and Thai traditional authoritarianism. According to Jeamteerasakul, this concept was largely different from the similar type in the West, "parliamentary democracy *and* the King as the Head of the State". This "Thai-style democracy" differed from the West in the sense that the Thai monarch was capable of performing political power in many ways. Furthermore, this concept has positioned the King as the Head of Democracy, thereby constructing the new memory that Thai democracy was a result of Prajadhipok's granting. See Jeamteerasakul, Somsak (1996) 'Khwam mai lae khwam pen ma khong "rabop prachathippatai an mi phra

modified form of democracy significantly increased the monarchy's power in politics and even created a new national history, changing the position of the monarchy to that of both the initiator and the promoter of democracy. Prajadhipok, who passed away in England in 1941 had been reincarnated as a nationalist democratic figure. The Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok at the National Assembly serves as the materialisation of this discourse. What follows is an investigation of the recirculation of the images of Prajadhipok in the 10th December ceremony in the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok. It will explain the performativity of the statue as a manipulative device. By excluding one memory while constructing another (Forty, 1999), the statue suppressed the People's Party's memory as an agent of democracy and replaced it with the new one, that is, Prajadhipoü as the true begetter of democracy.

Twisting Memory: Designs and Debates

If image is a prolongation of the presence of the people who have passed away, and a transformation of the absence to a new kind of presence (Belting, 2005: 45), a figurative monument may be perceived as the representation of the permanent body that replaces the ephemeral, actual body (Llewellyn, 1991). However, this attempt in creating the visual representation that substitutes the King's actual bodily remains in a public place has gone through many changes, both in terms of design and location, and was not finished until 1980. This part discusses the debate around the unrealised designs, the construction planning and the changes of location in order to conduct an inquiry on attitudes towards the statue. By means of referring to and altering the past action on the 10th December 1932, it analyses how the visualisation of the royal statue re-shaped perspectives towards the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony as well as the King himself.

In 1949, Phibun's government, in collaboration with Rangsit, the Prince Regent, and the Supreme Council of State, invited Queen Rambhai Barni to return to Thailand (Thepsongkrao, 2013: 109).[147] As the Queen brought Prajadhipok's relics along with her, it is

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mahakasat song pen pramuk" ' [The meaning and origin of the concept "democratic form of government *with* the king as the head of the state"] *Krung Thep Turakij*, 17th August 1996, no pagination and 'Khwam pen ma khong "rabop prachathippatai an mi phra mahakasat song pen pramuk" nai thana udomkan ratchakan' [The origin of the concept "democratic form of government *with* the king as the head of the state" as the official ideology] *Krung Thep Turakij*, 24th August 1996, no pagination.

[147] The years between 1949-1950 was full of royal ceremonies such as the religious services for Prajadhipok's relics and Prince Boworadet's relics, who had returned from asylum in Cambodia in 1948, the cremation of Prince Naris, the Coronation of King Bhumibol and the Royal Cremation of King Ananda Mahidol.

evident that the return home of the exiled King was closely tied to the change of political climate after the 1947 coup. Contrary to the simple cremation at Golders Green Crematorium in North London in 1941, the King's relics received a full honorary welcome with a Buddhist service on returning to Thailand. The relics were divided into bones and ashes; the bones were kept along with those of other royal highnesses at the Chakri Maha Prasat Throne Hall, which literally means "the seating of the Chakris", in the Grand Palace complex (Ratchakitchanubeksa, Vol. 26, No. 66, 24th May 1949: 2262-2271), while the ashes were placed in the Ratchabophit Temple, one of the royal monasteries (Ratchakitchanubeksa, Vol. 34, No. 66, 28th June 1949: 2931-2933).

Whereas the rehabilitation of Prajadhipok happened as part of the restoration project of the monarchy's popularity, his relics never became a national commemorative object. Residing in the royal place, Prajadhipok's relics, as well as those of other Chakri dynasty members, were not accessible to the public. Nevertheless, the deceased King was not completely absent from the public spectacle. The idea of constructing a visual eulogy of Prajadhipok was first conceived in April 1949, one month prior to the arrival of his relics. Luang Burakamkowit (Log Disayaniyom or Lom Burakamkowit), the Director-General of the Department of Public Works sent a letter to Silpa Bhirasri at the Fine Art Department asking him to make a plaster model of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok[148] to be erected at the Samsen Intersection in front of the Sukhothai Palace, the King's former residence (NAT: Ministry of Interior: MI.1.1.3.3/1 [103]).

The construction did not take place; the Thai historian Saranyou Thepsongkraow (2013) proposed that Phibun might have intervened in the process because it would increase the monarchy's popularity. As the 1949 constitution had given them increased power, Phibun staged the Silent Coup (also known as the Radio Coup) in November 1951 to consolidate military hold on the country and reinstated the 1932 constitution, which effectively eliminated the royalist force in politics. Nevertheless, Phibun's cabinet restored the plan for the construction of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok and announced the new location as the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall. Thepsongkraow interpreted this act as an attempt to compromise with the royalists and, more importantly, to validate the 1932 constitution, which had been signed by the deceased King (113-116). The meeting on 4th December 1951 agreed to build a statue for Prajadhipok as he had granted Thailand its first constitution: 'an origin of peace and the country's progress' (NAT: Ministry of Interior: MI.1.1.3.3/1 [98]).

[148] The design of the plaster model had been lost.

As such, the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok was not a visual eulogy for the King but also a means to enforce the reinstatement of the 10th December 1932 constitution.

Consequently, the Ministry of Interior ordered the Department of Public Works to design the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok at the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall where the King had granted the 1932 constitution. The drawing shows the King sitting under the nine-tiered Great White Umbrella of State surmounting the Throne on the royal seating "Phra thi nang phuttan kanchana singhassana", carrying a book of constitution, *ratthathammanun*, in the granting manner (Fig. 62). The statue was placed inside the domed pavilion, which echoed the larger domes of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall behind it. However, the location was changed in 1952 to the Democracy Monument (Anusaowari Prachathippatai, unveiled in 1940) on Ratchadamnoen Avenue (Fig. 63).[149] The report of the first meeting of the Monument Committee on the 31st January 1952 stated that the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall was too difficult for public access. It argued that the central fort of the Democracy Monument, which had the sculpture of *phan ratthathammanun* on its top, should be dismantled and replaced with the King's statue because *phan ratthathammanun* was 'only an object that the King had granted, not the King himself' (NAT: Ministry of Interior: MI.1.1.3.3/1 [57]).

This plan demonstrates an attempt in establishing a new memory through iconoclasm — the destruction of an existing monument.[150] The People's Party under the government of Phibun built the Democracy Monument on Ratchadamnoen Avenue to commemorate the revolution on the 24th June 1932. The construction of the Democracy Monument was part of the extension of Ratchadamnoen Avenue, which included the construction of modern buildings, new roads and Wanchat Bridge (National Day Bridge). Phibun's modern transformation of Ratchadamnoen Avenue showed how the revolutionary expressed the new national ideology visually and used it as propaganda (Wong, 2006: 49). The unveiling speech

[149] The Democracy Monument has been central to the political manifestations and struggles in Thailand from the time of the People's Party to the present. Various groups used this monument as site of protests including in the 14th October Incident (1973), Black May (1992) and in many protests by the Red Shirts and the Yellow Shirts since 2006 (the used of Democracy Monument in relation to the political conflict between 2009 and 2010 will be fully discussed in Chapter 5). Thai Historian Malini Khumsupha studied the change of symbolic meaning of Democracy Monument in relation to the Thai democracy development from 1940 to 1997. See Khumsupha, Malini (2005) *Ibid*. See also, Eosiwong, Nidhi (1990) *Ibid*.

[150] For a study of iconoclasm, see for example, Yampolsky, Mikhail (1995) 'In the Shadow of Monuments: Notes on Iconoclasm and Time', translated by John Kachur, in Condee, Nancy, (ed.) *Soviet Hieroglyphics*, Indiana and London: Indiana University Press and British Film Institute, p. 93-112; Gamboni, Dario (1997) *The Destruction of Art: Iconoclasm and Vandalism since the French Revolution*, London: Reaktion Books; Boldrick, Stacey *et al*. (eds.) (2013) *Striking Images, Iconoclasms Past and Present*, Surrey: Ashgate and Noyes, James H. (2013) *The Politics of Iconoclasm Religion: Violence and the Culture of Image-Breaking in Christianity and Islam*, London: I. B. Tauris.

on National Day,[151] 24th June 1940, declared that the Democracy Monument aimed to celebrate democracy and to encourage the Thais to support the democratic system as their national duty. The monument was also a symbol of the centre of the nation's progress since it was considered to be the National Highway's Kilometre Zero (NAT: Ministry of Education: ME 0701.23.1/7).

The Democracy Monument, which was a work of Mom Luang Pum Malakul and Silpa Bhirasri,[152] is the People's Party's legacy and its most powerful symbol. It is loaded with symbols associated with the 1932 Revolution and the People's Party. According to *Thai nai patjuban* [Thailand in the present time], published by the Public Relations Department as a commemorative document celebrating the 1940 National Day, the proportion and elements of the monument were designed according to a set of numbers that relate to the 1932 Revolution. The four upright wings, each 24 metres high with a 24-metres radius, meant the 24th, the date of the revolution. The upright wings signified the glory of democracy. The seventy-five cannons around the outer ring of the monument stood for the year 2475 in the Buddhism calendar (corresponding to 1932), the year of the revolution. The bas-reliefs on the bases of the four wings depicted the 1932 Revolution and the scenes of the ideal Thai society as a result of the revolution. The 3-metre-high fort in the middle of the monument, which had a sculpture of *phan ratthathammanun* on top, characterised the People's Party's constitution. The 3-metre height signified the third month, June, the month of the revolution.[153] The six swords on the six doors of the fort represented the Six Principles of the People's Party: Independence, Security, Economics, Equality, Liberty, and Education (Public Relations Department, 1940).[154]

Malakul and Bhirasri were members of the Monument Committee for the construction of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok but they were not in a position to resist the conversion of their previous work. Malakul, who was the architect of the Department of Public Works was asked to design the royal statue. He adopted the former design for the

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[151] The government of Phibun announced the 24th of June as National Day on that date in 1939. The foundation stone for Democracy Monument was placed on the same day.

[152] Mom Luang Pum Malakul designed the overall monument but Bhirasri designed the bas-reliefs on the bases of the monument's four wings.

[153] In the old system, the first month of the year is April, as the 13th April marked the New Year. The system changed according to an international one in 1941.

[154] The Thai architect Saengarun Ratkasikon criticised the symbolic numbering in the Democracy Monument as failure: noncommunicative and unattractive. See Ratkasikon, Saengarun (1971) 'Anusaowari thi Thai tham' [Monuments that the Thais built] in *The Freshman's Guide of Faculty of Architecture, Silpakorn University*, Bangkok: Silpakorn University. See also, Wongsurawat, Janice (1987) *A Critical Analysis of the Form and Symbolic Content of the Democracy Monument as a Work of Art, With Emphasis on the Reliefs on the Bases of the Four Wings*, Bangkok: The Research Centre of Silpakorn University.

Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall in 1951 to replace the central fort of the Democracy Monument and submitted three designs to the committee. The first design shows the King sitting under the domed pavilion; the four wings of the Democracy Monument were dismantled but the bases of the wings remained to place traditional lamps (Fig. 64). The second design depicts the King without the domed pavilion, the four wings were also taken out but the bases of the wings became a place for altar offerings (Fig. 65). The third design is similar to the second one but both the four wings and the bases remained (Fig. 66). The committee agreed to the second design (Secretariat of the Cabinet (2): SC.3.37/14).

From these designs, the assertion of the King's statue to replace the central fort indicated an iconoclastic act from the royalists towards the revolution's legacy. The new visual appearance of the Democracy Monument with the statue of Prajadhipok at the centre would have destroyed entirely the meaning of the revolution of 24th June 1932. This attempt marked the counter-revolutionary's challenge to the discourse of the democracy's initiator on symbolic grounds. It demonstrated what Pierre Nora described as "layers of memories": memories of place that can be superimposed layer by layer (Nora, 1999: 87). Without the central fort that embodied the People's Party revolution and their Six Principles, the King's image from the 10th December Ceremony would have superseded the story of the People's Party's revolution and transformed the Democracy Monument into a royalist monument, changing the date of the beginning of Thai democracy from 24th June 1932 to 10th December 1932.[155] The removal of a symbol of the People's Party's version of democracy demonstrated an attempt to demolish an unwanted memory and to construct a new one in artistic terms. It affirmed the power of the new ruler because erecting a new monument on the site of the old one signified victory, which meant killing two birds with one stone: iconoclasm and the erection of a new idol (Yampolsky, 1995: 100).

Although this design was evidently aimed at enhancing the meaning of royalist democracy, the idea of erecting the royal statue on the Democracy Monument was considered to be inappropriate by some members of the government. Prime Minister Phibun did not oppose this plan but the Minister of Finance, Prayun Phamonmontri, who was also one of the leading members of the People's Party, argued that destroying the existing monument was also destroying the national memory of a particular period (Secretariat of the

[155] It should also be noted that the 24th June is no longer National Day. Prime Minister Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat (in office 1958-1963), one of the strongest supporters of Bhumibol, changed it to the 5th December, Bhumibol's birthday, in 1960. For further study about Thanarat's regime, see Chalemtiarana, Thak (1979) *Thailand: The Politics of Despotic Pateralism*, Bangkok: Social Sciences Association of Thailand and Thai Khadi Institute of Thammasat University.

Cabinet (2): SC.3.2.1/14). Others suggested that a new location should be found because the King deserved a better and more honourable place (NAT: Ministry of Interior: MI.1.1.3.3/1 [20]). In the end the construction was restrained due to financial problems (NAT: Ministry of Interior: MI.1.1.3.3/1 [2].

The construction of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok again became a focal point of the meeting of the cabinet under Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn in December 1969. The cabinet brought back the idea of converting the Democracy Monument (Siam Rath, 18th December 1969) but Yai Sawitchat, Secretary of the Democrat Party (Prachathipat Party) strongly remonstrated against it. He argued that it should be preserved because, despite being an object of hostility, the Democracy Monument was evidence of the evil past of the People's Party era (Siam Rath, 24th December 1969). Klaeo Norapati, Deputy Leader of Sethakon Party also said that the government should seek for a more suitable and elegant location to honour the King (Chao Thai, 3rd January 1970). Senator Phadet Jirapon (Chao Thai, 16th December 1969; Siam Rath, 18th December 1969) and the Secretary-General of National Assembly, Prasoet Pattamasukhon (NAT: Compilation of reports/1/225: 2), proposed another two locations, the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall and the under-construction National Assembly.

Pattamasukhon suggested that the statue at the new National Assembly should feature a group of sculptures consisting of the King's statue standing on the pedestal, baring hands forward in the act of granting the constitution, and the sculpture of *phan ratthathammanun* on a lower pedestal in front of him (Ibid.). The result of the interactive performativity between the two sculptures reflects in the third sculpture, that is, the reliefs on the wall showing images of Thai people blessed with the royal granting. Whereas the people, the commoner was considered as a "citizen" in the constitutionalist regime, the return of the monarchy has reconstituted it as a "subject" under the King, the status of the pre-1932 era. As such, the image of the commoners in this design implies that the status of the Thais is as the subject of the King's decency as his act caused them great happiness. Hence, these sculptures demonstrate a new historical perception towards Prajadhipok: the King as the begetter of Thai democracy who has provided the joyfulness of freedom and of self-administration to his people. However, the new National Assembly construction was completed without the statue. The plan was suspended again until a group of representatives led by Pramuan Kunlamat made an appeal to Prime Minister Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn in 1971. They also proposed a new design of the statue as a life-size Prajadhipok standing in a military costume (NAT: Compilation of reports/1/225: 4).

As this part has demonstrated, the issue of location was the central concern of the construction of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok. Apart from debates in the cabinet, an opinion from the non-government sector was found in the column *Nuea Tai Ok Tok* [North, South, East, West] written by Luang Klang Krung in *Deli News*. The columnist, who claimed to be the voice of the Thai people, wrote that the public thought that the royal statue should be erected in a public place. From his perspective, the new National Assembly, as an official institution, would obstruct the public from visiting the statue to pay homage. He even stated that the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok should be a public monument in the sense that it belonged to the public. Thus, the democratic government, which derived from the King's generosity, should set up the budget in part and allow people to participate by means of fundraising (Deli News, 24th December 1969).

The search for the perfect location for the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok reflects the close relationship between the construction of cultural memory and place. Whereas the first choice of the Sukhothai Palace, Prajadhipok's former residence, was a place associated only with the King, the other two choices, the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall where the King had granted the first constitution and the People's Party's Democracy Monument had political implications dating back to the People's Party's regime. As a residential palace, the absence of any democratic connotations at the Sukhothai Palace was definitely the key that made the debate over the location never considering this site. In contrast, the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall and the Democracy Monument were historical places with appropriate narratives (Azaryahu, 1993) as well as being commemorative landscapes (Raivo, 2000). Hence, they appeared as sites of memory or *lieux de mémoire* (Nora, 1996) where memory rivalry may take place. As a site of contestation (Gold and Revill, 2000), the attempt to erect the representation of the democratic King on these sites indicated not only an iconoclastic attempt in demolishing the revolutionary associations but also a punctuation of space to highlight a specific landscape as a point of reference (Verdery, 1999); by twisting the memory of the origins of Thai democracy with the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok, these sites would have become the visual references of royalist democracy.

Nevertheless, as it has been shown, these two sites were not selected; the last choice of the new National Assembly, because of a lack of historical references, became the site of choice. The positioning of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok at the new National Assembly emphasised that Thai democracy was inseparable from royalism, in a sense that it was granted by and governed under royal sovereignty. The following part of this chapter discusses the last phase of the construction in relation to the political circumstances of the

14th October Incident (1973) and the 6th October Massacre, also known as the Thammasart University Massacre (1976). It will examine the performativity of the pairing of image and text: the King's image from the 10th December Ceremony (1932) and the abdication message (1935) in the final design.

Democracy and Anti-Communism

The Thai historians, Nidhi Eosiwong (1990) and Somsak Jeamteerasakul (2001) agreed that the resumption of the construction of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok in 1974 was a consequence of the 14th October Incident in 1973. However, the construction did not begin until the National Administrative Reform Council (NARC) took power after the 6th October Massacre in 1976. This section will argue that the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok was an outcome of the 6th October Massacre and can be perceived as an emblem of neo-royalism that combined democracy with anti-communism. The fear of communism, which can be traced back to the Yellow Cover Dossier Conflict (1933), continued to haunt the Thai elites throughout the Cold War era and reached its peak in the 6th October Massacre when student-activists were accused of being communist. This section will place the construction of the royal statue in the post-6th October context in order to observe the pinnacle of neo-royalism in the form of public statuary.

At this point it is necessary to understand the role of Prajadhipok in the 14th October Incident, the popular uprising that rallied against the military dictatorship of Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn. The political crisis motivated the employment of nostalgia[156] in the struggle against authoritarianism. The intellectuals, academics and students who had resisted military dictatorship underlined the strength of their protest by reviving royalist ideology (Jeamteerasakul, 2001; Kongkirati, 2005). This illustrated that the reconstruction of the past was a selective and purposeful process and it served as the solution to the current problems (Halbwachs, 1992: 34).

As previously stated, the royalist propaganda in the post-1947 period projected Prajadhipok as the Democratic King, and the former Boworadet Rebellion prisoners as the guardians of democracy whilst the People's Party was the forefather of military dictatorship. The two parties became the dichotomy; the hero and the villain; the representative of true democracy and the origin of dictatorship (Kongkirati, 2005: 379, 508-11). As such, the

[156] Svetlana Boym indicated that the usage of nostalgia was prevalent during the upheavals. See Boym, Svetlana (2001) *Ibid*.

student movement of the 1970s, which primarily aimed at protesting against Prime Minister Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn, took Prajadhipok as the perfect model of a political ruler. The new conception of nationalism emerged as the neo-royal nationalism that associates the royal with democracy (Winichakul, 2001: 62-63).

This part of Prajadhipok's abdication letter, 'I am willing to surrender the powers I formerly exercised to the people as a whole, but I am not willing to turn them over to any individual or any group to use in an autocratic manner without hearing the voice of the people' (Prajadhipok, 1935) was particularly essential to the formation of his posthumous democratic credentials. The passage was first quoted and publicised by Thongto Kluaimai na Ayutthaya in the article entitled *Phra Pokklao Sala Ratcha Sombat* [King Prajadhipok's abdication] (1968) published *in Sangkhomsat Porithat* [Social Sciences Review Journal], the journal which was very popular among students and intellectuals prior to the 14th October Incident.[157] The writer wrote that the King had sacrificed his power for the sake of the people's happiness. He emphasised that the abdication occurred because the King had found out that the new government had not followed democratic principles and that he would not be capable of fulfilling his duty to protect the Thai people.[158] This new image of Prajadhipok rapidly spread throughout the nation by the reproduction of the text in various media.

The zenith of the abdication message arrived when it appeared on the cover of pamphlets and posters distributed by "Klum riak rong Ratthathammanun" (Call for Constitution Group) on 5th October 1973 (Jeamteerasakul, 2001; Kongkirati, 2005). The 13-strong student group petitioned Kittikachorn's military government to grant the constitution but was arrested by the police. This incident led to an uprising of students and mass demonstrations against the government for their corruption and unlawful arrests, with demands for the end of tyranny to be replaced by real democracy. The Democracy

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[157] Sulak Sivaraksa, also known as "Panyachon Siam" (The Siamese Intellectual), a social activist and critic and a Buddhist scholar founded the journal *Sangkhomsat Porithat* (Social Science Review Journal). The journal published articles by political prisoners from the Boworadet Rebellion and writings by royalist intellectuals including Mom Rajawongse Seni Pramoj and the political scientists such as Thongto Kluaimai na Ayutthaya and Chai-Anan Samudavanija.

[158] Despite its democratic undertones, the abdication was an outcome of long-term irreconcilable conflicts between Prajadhipok and the People's Party which started with Banomyong's radical economic reform in 1933. Prajadhipok tried to negotiate with the People's Party for more royal power; the King's "strongest weapon" was to intimidate the People's Party that if his requirements were not fulfilled, he would abdicate. His concern about communism also was evident in the negotiations; for the Thai elites, communism and socialism were one and the same. The government did not satisfy his demands, leaving no choices for him but the abdication. Therefore, the King's abdication in 1935 was the result of conflict between him and the People's Party, not the matter of administrating 'without hearing the voice of the people' as stated in the letter. See the elaborated discussion of Prajadhipok's abdication and the effect of the abdication letter in the 1970s in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 of Jeamteerasakul, Somsak (2001) *Prawatsat thi phoeng sang* [History that has just been constructed], Bangkok: 6 Tularamleok.

Monument served as one of the main sites of the protest. Eventually, on 14th October,[159] the army fired on the students and citizens, the violence only ending when Bhumibol intervened and ordered the exile of the Prime Minister.[160] Sanya Thammasak, Privy Councillor and the chancellor of Thammasart University, became prime minister by royal command.

Consequently, the construction plans of the Royal Statue of Prajadhipok re-emerged with the formation of "Sapha Sanamma", a group of legislators, which included Pramuan Kunlamat, in the National Legislative Assembly. Kukrit Pramoj, the President of the National People's Assembly founded the new Monument Committee on 19th September 1974.[161] The report of the first meeting of the Monument Committee on the 15th October 1974 stated that there would be an inscription of the abdication message at the base of the statue, which was to be erected at the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall (NAT: Ministry of Education: (4) ME.2.3.6.9/23). The addition of the abdication letter to the design significantly relates the statue to the discourse of the Democratic King. This clearly referred to the 14th October Incident when an appropriation of Prajadhipok in the anti-dictatorship discourse and King Bhumibol's intervention in the political crisis had generated a unique achievement for the royalists: the political imagination of royalty as the guardian of democracy. The location at the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall emphasised this aspect. The report informed that the statue must be seen together with the palace background from every angle.

Fig. 67 displays the small three-dimensional model of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok in front of the drawing of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall. Despite the fact that no information on the designer and the year of creation was recorded at the National Archives of Thailand where these documents are preserved, they are presumed to be for the design made in 1974. The picture presents Prajadhipok as described in the meeting report of that year: dressing in the royal attire and wearing the Great Crown of Victory, which was wrongly identified as the Maha Kathin Crown that the King had actually worn at the 10th December Ceremony. The meeting report also indicated that the Fine Art Department was appointed to make a clay model of the statue as well as a low barrier and the moveable background plane for the next meeting in November 1974 (NAT: The Fine Art Department:

[159] The idea of building the Memorial to the 14th October 1973 on Ratchadamnoen Avenue was first conceived in 1974 but it was finally realised in 2001 under the care of the 14th October Foundation.
[160] Apart from portraying Prajadhipok as the Father of Democracy, the demonstrators also carried images of the present King Bhumibol as they marched along Ratchadamnoen Avenue and past the Democracy Monument. The monarch has been perceived as the rescuer of political crisis and an alliance of democracy ever since.
[161] Praphat Uaichai took over this position in 1975 because Pramoj became Prime Minister.

The report from the first meeting of King Prajadhipok Monument Committee, 1/2517, 15th October 1974).

The picture also illustrates the environmental concerns debated in the meeting. Firstly, there must be an open space for paying homage and for state ceremonies. Secondly, the statue would not be independent in its space but integral to the palace background. By placing the clay model in front of the drawing of the palace, it can be clearly seen that the arch on the background plan has echoed the arches of the gate and rows of window on the Western-style palace in the background. The plan discussed in 1978 for constructing the base of the statue with Carrara marble from Italy, the same material as the palace, emphasised this aspect (NAT: National Assembly: The report from the forth meeting of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok Committee, 4/2521, 8th March 1978).

The form adopted was highly monumental. Two rows of small bushes and fountains lead the perspective view towards the statue on a high basement, creating both a sense of direction and grandeur. As such, the statue seems to be an integral part of the palace, making a connection to its builder, the first absolutist King and Western-culture admirer King Chulalongkorn, father of Prajadhipok. His royal power was thus markedly strengthened yet the democratic aspect was also added through the application of his image from 10th December 1932. Fig. 67 exposes the symbolic greatness of the two Kings, father and son, combining the energy of the absolutist regime in the form of a monumental palace with the post-People's Party version of democracy that was identified by the image of Prajadhipok in the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony.

The palace gave permission in 1975 to erect the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok at the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall. The Monument Committee met again to discuss the design further on 19th March 1976. The Chairman of the Monument Committee, Captain Somphop Phirom, the former Director-General of the Fine Arts Department and Dean of Architecture Faculty from Silpakorn University emphasised to the members of the committee that the design must derive from the 10th December Ceremony. Mom Luang Pi Malakul, who knew well the court traditions, corrected the royal headpiece from the Great Crown of Victory as the Maha Kathin Crown as it had been misunderstood in the 1974 design. The committee agreed that the basement would house the King Prajadhipok Museum with a collection of his personal items (NAT: The Fine Art Department: The report from the first meeting of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok Committee, 1/2519, 8th March 1976).

Before construction began, Thailand encountered more political turmoil: the 6th October Massacre of 1976. The student movement, which had been in its heyday since 1973,

protested against the return to the country of Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn, who had been in exile in disguise as a Buddhist monk. At the same time, the communist military successes in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam in 1975 evoked the fear of the far left among the Thai elites, the old fear since the time of the People's Party. The protest by socialist students from various universities and activists increased this anxiety. The situation worsened when a play performed by the student protestors on 5th October was deemed as parodying the Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn, Bhumibol's official heir. As a result, they were accused of being communist and a threat to the monarchy: an enemy of the state.

On the morning of 6th October 1976, right-wing militia and the Border Patrol Police attacked the protestors at Thammasart University and Sanam Luang, leading to a massacre where students were shot, beaten, burnt and their bodies mutilated. According to the official count, 46 people died in the attack but the number of deaths has been questioned. Some estimates put it at over a hundred and many protestors are still missing to this day.[162] The rampage lasted several hours with help from other right-wing groups such as the Red Guard, the Nawaphon and the Village Scouts.[163] It ended when the National Administrative Reform Council (NARC); a military junta led by Admiral Sa-ngat Chaloayu seized power, who later appointed the anti-communist and royal-favourite politician Thanin Kraiwichian as prime minister.

The NARC controlled both the National Assembly and National Legislative Assembly while Kraiwichian's extreme-right government actively operated the anti-communist plan. In 1977 it resumed the construction of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok and appointed Air Chief Marshal Harin Hongsakun, the President of the National Legislative Assembly to be the President of the Monument Committee. Hongsakun

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[162] The survivors were arrested. The 18 student leaders were charged with treason and violation of the Anti-Communist Act; among them were Thongchai Winichakul and Somsak Jeamteerasakul, whom this thesis has referred to extensively. Winichakul and Jeamteerasakul, at that time aged 19, were released in 1978. Winichakul is currently a professor of Southeast Asian History at the University of Wisconsin-Medison in the US while Jeamteerasakul returned to Thammasart University. He served in the Department of History until General Prayut Chan-o-cha staged a military coup on 22nd May 2014 whereupon he left Thailand.

[163] Despite the significance of the massacre in Thai politics, the 6th October Massacre has been largely neglected and forgotten in Thai history and the public consciousness. Most school textbooks completely skip this event or briefly report it. However, there were several literatures that try to bring this difficult memory back to light. Apart from several works of Winichakul and Jeamteerasakul, see for example, Klum Phadung Tham (ed.) (1988) *Rao khue phu borisut: Ekkasan ang ing thang prawatsat bantheuk hetkan 6 tula 2519* [We are innocent: Historical documents, memoirs of the 6th October 1976], Bangkok: Klum Phadung Tham; The Committee of the 20th Anniversary of the 6th October (ed.) (1996) *Tulakan* [October's time], Bangkok: The Committee of the 20th Anniversary of the 6th October and Kasetsiri, Charnvit and Phetloetanan, Thamrongsak (1998) *Jak 14 thueng 6 Tula* [From 14th October to 6th October], Bangkok: Thammasart University. Thammasart University also organises an annual commemorative event and erected the memorial of the 6th October Massacre in 1996.

set up the new Monument Committee with the support of the Prime Minister Kraiwichian. His account written in the commemorative book celebrating his 6th Cycle Birthday Anniversary in 1986 (72 years old) recalled that Kriang Keeratikon, the Second Vice-Chairman, had encouraged him to oversee the construction because 'it seems that no one in Thailand had remembered King's Prajadhipok's kindness' (Hongsakun, 1986: 126).

The Monument Committee of NARC changed the plans to the final location at the new National Assembly. Hongsakun wrote that some influential persons, whom he did not name, sent the letter to the Prime Minister to oppose the use of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall for two reasons. Firstly, the presence of the royal statue would destroy the uniqueness of the palace. Secondly, the royal area would become dirty, being open to the public. This opposition points to the relationship between landscape and class (Harvey, 1989), which rendered a concern about approaching the monument as an act of transgression to a royal, protective zone (Yampolsky, 1995: 94). By allowing public visiting, the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall would have been transformed into a public space or even a tourist spot,[164] turning the sacred to the profane.

However, Hongsakun defended the choice of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall by emphasising the historical aspect of the site, as the Kings granted all Thai constitutions from the first to the present one at this palace, which has served as the National Assembly since 1932. The state ceremony on 10th December was always organised there as well. For him, to erect the royal statue elsewhere would indeed be a historical distortion. In addition, the statue was not to be a public space as the protestors had understood. He argued that having public visitors in on special occasions such as the King's birthday and on 10th December should be permitted. More importantly, this plan had already received royal permission in 1975 (Hongsakun, 1986: 131-132). The debate was over in 1979 with the new National Assembly as the winning site.

Despite concerns about the royal protective zone, the new National Assembly, built between 1970 and 1974, is located just behind the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall and remains inside the royal area of the Dusit Palace. Although the location is not necessarily part of the urban landscape, the selection of the centre of the country's administration perfectly serves the royalist agenda. The erection of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok at

[164] It should be noted that commoners are able to enter royal areas, such as the Temple of the Emerald Buddha and some parts of the Grand Palace, which are some of the most popular tourist attractions in the country. The Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall also opened its doors to the public with the exhibition *Arts of the Kingdom*, organised by the Queen Sirikit Institute, which has shown in the palace six times since 1992. However, a strict dress code and code of practices are applied to all visitors.

its final location, in front of the Secretariat of the National Assembly Building at the National Assembly, reflects the new political system of parliamentary democracy with the King as the Head of the State as constructed in 1949 (Fig. 61). It imposed the meaning of a royalist democracy at the site and punctuated the bond between democracy and the throne. The visibility of Prajadhipok's body in monument form intensified the concept of a royalist democracy. The seated figure of Prajadhipok at the National Assembly is therefore meaningful and evocative as an object of remembrance for Thai politicians every time they go to work. The same concept would be inscribed in the public consciousness through visiting as this place, despite being designated as a royal area, is accessible to the public unlike Phra Thinang Chakri Maha Prasart where the King's bodily remains were securely kept.

After a long-drawn-out debate, the Monument Committee of the NARC settled with the final design; the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok would depict the King in a 1.5 times larger-than-life bronze-caste sculpture wearing royal attire and the Maha Kathin Crown decorated with feathers of a bird of paradise. The King would sit on "Phra thi nang phuttan kanchana singhassana", placing his two hands on his legs. The committee's decision in leaving the King's hands on his legs instead of showing the act of granting was because they wanted the statue to display the moment *after* the granting. The reason given was an artistic one; 'executing statue is like creating art; no need to reveal or demonstrate the whole historical truth, no need to express inner thought or consciousness through action which would destroy its artistic value' (NAT: Compilation of reports/1/225: 20). The basement of the statue housed the King Prajadhipok Museum.[165]

The committee also insisted that a static-posed statue would be more powerful because it was more capable of demonstrating the strength of mind than a monument in an action pose. This pose of sitting statically on the throne with a calm facial expression implies his supreme authority and thereby displays a performative act; the noble task *had been done*. After the moment of granting, it is now a time for his subjects, the Thai people, to come and show gratitude in front of his representation.[166] The consideration of public accessibility

[165] The King Prajadhipok Museum was relocated in 2002 to the old, three-storey building that formerly belonged to the Department of Public Works on the corner of Phanfaa Intersection, Ratchadamnoen Avenue. In 2008, the museum was extended to include another five-storey building on the same compound. The new building named "Queen Rambhai Barni Building" consisted of the King Prajadhipok Information Centre, the Exhibition Hall of the Royal Car, the Museum Shop, the Hall for Temporary Exhibition, the Exhibition Hall of the Thai Cabinet, the Exhibition Hall of the Royal Regalia, the Office of the King Prajadhipok Museum, the Permanent Exhibition of the Thai Parliament, the Seminar Room and the VIP Room.

[166] It should be noted that the committee also discussed having the image of the commoner in a receiving act in front of the King's statue as a representative of the grateful Thais. Nevertheless, this idea was considered

remarked that the expression of gratefulness, which had been central to the construction of King Prajadhipok's Royal Statue since the beginning, shifted from being represented through the image of the commoners, as in the design for the Democracy Monument, to the performance of actual people. Instead of creating an interactive mode between the royal statue and the representation of the commoner in sculptural form, this design generated a bond between the deceased King and real, living people. By initiating an interaction between the King's representational body and the body of the living through the act of paying homage, King Prajadhipok's Royal Statue signals the dynamism of royalism in the present as a continuous flow from the past. Furthermore, this kind of public accessibility is in contrast to the past when the authorities had sustained their power by being tangibly separate from the populace as they were too divine to be approached by ordinary people. Yet, like the first anthropomorphic monument of the King of Siam, the Equestrian Statue of King Chulalongkorn at the Royal Plaza, the position of Prajadhipok's body on a high pedestal distinguishes him from the visitor.

Whereas it is typical for statues to be on a high pedestal, leaving space in front for visitors, the arrangement of space and viewing in the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok reflects the Thai hierarchical class status that places the King in the supreme position. This structure of perception generates the space of the monument as a sacral zone (Yampolsky, 1995). Specifically, the distance between the figure of Prajadhipok on the pedestal and the bodies of the onlooker on the lower ground marks their class difference and constitutes the onlooker, their imagined selves, as the subject of the King's generosity. It enforces the beholder to look up to the King, whose elevation operates both in a physical and metaphorical sense. Their perspective is thus controlled by the King-subject relationship. By confronting with the representational body of Prajadhipok, the beholder is looking at the noble King who is both the origin and the last refuge of Thai democracy. His gaze, poise and pose make him symbolically the King who watches over his population, a subject under his ruling, from the National Assembly, the centre of the country's administration. This statue thus displays a royalist version of democracy, that is, monarchism in disguise, and supports the royalist narrative that projected Thai democracy as a top-down development. The seated figure of Prajadhipok on the throne reflects the King's supreme authority as indicated in Prajadhipok's two drafts of the constitution: Francis B. Sayre's *Outline of Preliminary Draft* (1926) and Raymond B. Stevens and Phraya Siwisanwaja's *An Outline of Changes in the*

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inappropriate because if the present King Bhumibol came to pay homage to the statue he would have to bow before the image of the commoner. NAT: Compilation of Reports/1/225: 20.

Form of Government (1933). The two drafts, nevertheless, positioned the King as the supreme ruler. Here, the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok appears to be a solidified form of the democratic-royalist paradox: democracy under the throne.

The Monument Committee attempted to ensure that the Thai people would feel gratitude for Prajadhipok's kindness. They intensively used mass media such as newspaper, public radio and television as well as collaboration with the private sector to persuade the people to contribute financially to the construction in order to show their gratitude to the King. Squadron Leader Kamthon Sinthawanon published a pamphlet in honour of Prajadhipok with financial support from the Siam Commercial Bank. The English Newspaper the Bangkok Post also published a special edition to honour Prajadhipok. The joint income was donated to the monument fund.

The promotion was also operated through the distribution of free pamphlets to schools, companies, shops and factories and the screening of a slide presentation about Prajadhipok and the importance of the 10th December Ceremony in cinemas all over the country. In addition, on 10th December, Harin Hongsakun, the President of the Monument Committee, together with his colleagues Plengsak Prakatphesat and Mom Rajawongse Thanadsri Sawasdiwat, gave interviews in a special programme for "Prajadhipok Day" on public radio and television (Channel 9) to promote the monument and to raise funds (NAT: Compilation of reports/1/225: 32-33). These exhaustive public relations and fundraising efforts formulated a sense of national unity through motivating active public participation (Mosse, 1991: 60). It further created the bond between Prajadhipok and the people, in a way that the donors were of a lower class. The King was regarded as the superior giver: the granter of the current political system and ruler of his donors who showed their gratitude through the act of donating. By contributing financially to the construction of the King's statue, the donors received a commemorative coin as a souvenir and, symbolically, his guardianship in return (NAT: Compilation of reports/1/225: 33-37).

Besides the image of the democratic King, Prajadhipok is the embodiment of anti-communist ideology. Although there is no trace of anti-communism to be found in any official and personal records of the design, the restoration of the plan by the NARC automatically added an anti-communist dimension to the image of Prajadhipok. Moreover, the presence of the abdication message in the post-6th October Massacre context has recalled the Yellow Cover Dossier Conflict between the King and the People's Party in 1933, an event that stood as the beginning of the chain of conflict that led to the King's abdication two years later. The following section of this chapter will focus on the appropriation of the

abdication message in order to explain how the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok condensed the three ideologies of royalism, democracy and anti-communism and thus appeared to be the perfect symbol of the neo-royalist-nationalist regime.

On the black marble panel under the royal throne of "Phra thi nang phuttan kanchana singhassana" was an inscription of the abdication message, 'I am willing to surrender the powers I formerly exercised to the people as a whole, but I am not willing to turn them over to any individual or any group to use in an autocratic manner without hearing the voice of the people' (Prajadhipok, 1935). Michael P. Levine (2006) observed that the importance of the inscription lay precisely in its instrumental value: an embodiment of and means to deliver certain meanings and messages. Since the abdication message was rooted in the anxiety of Banomyong's radical socialist economic plan, inscribing it with the image of the King in the Constitution Granting Ceremony underlined the intention of the royalist-anti-communist government to represent Prajadhipok as the paternal-democratic King as well as defender against communism.

As an affirmative statement, the abdication message served as counter-revolutionary propaganda, shaping the onlooker's opinion towards the development of democracy in favour of the monarchy. Firstly, it provided evidence of the King's democratic dedication, engendering and celebrating him as the forefather of Thai Democracy. Secondly, it enabled him to be the perfect symbol of the anti-communist post-6th October Massacre. Hence, Prajadhipok's opponents — the People's Party — were not only the origin of a military dictatorship, as it had appeared in the pre-14th October Incident, but also the embodiment of communism, another threat to the nation.

Furthermore, the abdication message formulated the false causality between the two separate events; the message in the abdication letter (1935) became the origin, a foundation for the political transformation from absolute to constitutional monarchy (1932). This feature demonstrates the aspect of propaganda according to David Welch: a narrative constructed by different kinds of truth, the outright lie, the half-truth and the truth out of context (Welch, 1995: 5). The discourse of Prajadhipok as the Father of Democracy was a combination of a half-truth and a truth out of context; it was true that the King had granted the constitution on 10th December 1932 and the abdication message was real — it was written by the King himself, but citing the abdication message as an explanation and reference to the granting of the constitution was in fact the creation of historical distortion. Through this act of assembling, the statue wrongly informed the onlooker that 10th December event was the royal initiation and the message in the abdication letter was the King's intention of that

event. In actual fact, the abdication letter was written in 1935, one year after Prajadhipok had fled to the UK, and by then the relationship between the King and the People's Party had completely deteriorated. This anachronistic assemblage created the erroneous recollection that conceived the King as the birth-giver of Thai democracy.

This composition reproduced and reasserted the widely-accepted belief of the post-People's Party period that the political transformation from absolute monarchy to democracy came out of the royal intentions not the commoner's government. As Kluaimai na Ayutthaya, the first to quote the message, explained, this message reflected the King's intentions and purpose; the King, who wholeheartedly dedicated himself to the happiness of his subjects, granted the Thai people the first constitution himself. Propaganda thus served not only to change attitudes and ideas but also to reinforce existing trends and beliefs (Ellul, 1965; Welch, 1995). The power and effectiveness of the royal statue to the onlooker relies on it being a reproduction of the existing discourse circulated within Thai society since 1947. This visual condensation of political ideology constitutes the new historical truth or the more appropriate memory concerning Thai democracy that cited Prajadhipok as the origin and embodiment of democratic ideology. The onlooker understood history based on what they had seen in the royal statue which re-confirmed their knowledge of the history of Thai politics.

As such, the creation and effectiveness of the discourse "Prajadhipok the Father of Democracy" was the outcome of a skilful propaganda. The whole educational system, statue, museum, press and popular media, all performed as a means to this end. The dynamic of counter-revolutionary propaganda has captured the imagination of the mass and thus facilitated the reception of such a discourse. This clearly demonstrates the royalist effort in possessing the memory. As part of a much larger memorialisation project, the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok functions as an educational-propagating tool; it confirmed the pro-monarchy perspective that identified the King as the birth-giver of the constitution. By re-presenting Prajadhipok's ceremonial act in the form of a public statue, the deceased King returned to the granting scene as the figure of sovereignty. And, as approaching the monument is an act of travelling to a different time (Yampolsky, 1995), what the onlookers of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok experience is a myth about the past created by historical distortion.

Consequently, the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok can be seen as an anti-memory statue; its ability to perform historical distortion marks its inability to serve as a remembrance of a person or an event. The way that the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok

suppressed the memory of the People's Party indicated that it was not a commemorative object that commemorated the past as it used to be. As Levine put it, the monument was 'indicative of a refusal to remember, to mourn or to engage the past' (2006: 121); the selective process of remembering makes this statue fail to participate in history as an object of recalling the past. Objects do not simply act as an agent of memory; in this case, it is indeed an anti-memory — an object of oblivion, in a sense that it has excluded or suppressed certain memory, leading to forgetfulness (Forty, 1999: 7). The Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok has in fact acknowledged the monument's inability to do what it is supposed to do.

Pierre Nora (1989) stated that monuments represent a "will to remember" but the power of monuments also involves forgetting. The past, as desired, has been re-written through the process of erasing the unwanted by inscribing, literally, on the inscription base. This monument thus recognises the manipulative aspect in memorial politics, serving a political status quo, falsifying memory and truths about the past (Levine, 2006: 124). As such, by subverting the People's Party's memory for a royalist one, the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok perfectly reveals the monument's intentional commemoration as a technology of memory renovation.

Levine also remarked that the 'current culture's inability or unwillingness to remember' (119), constitutes the memorial as anachronistic in nature. This inability or unwillingness to remember could lead to a construction of false memories being performed. The Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok has showcased and exemplified this anachronistic dimension through the false causal relationship between the text and the image. The application of the abdication message reveals the anachronistic essence of the monument as, by selection, the abdication letter was written in 1935 but became an explanation of the event in 1932. It projects the past as modified and manipulated for the purpose of constructing a new memory. That is that Thai democracy had derived from the King's willingness to grant it to his people. In this sense, the monument should rather be perceived as a means of reconstructing the past by means of exclusion, and as an object through which that reconstructed past was constituted. The construction of Prajadhipok's narrative thus indicates that history is not a serial connection of monadic or conforming events but a constructed narrative through the process of displacement and disjunction (Schwartz, 1982 cited in Halbwachs, 1992: 26).

Finally, the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok was unveiled on 10th December 1981 during the government of Prem Tinsulanonda, one of the most influential military figures

and a supporter of the House of Chakri.[167] Bhumibol attended the unveiling and performed a ritual ceremony to invite the spirit of his uncle to dwell in the statue (NAT: Compilation of reports/1/225: 40). As part of a rite of passage (Gennep, 1960), the monarchical power of the living King on the performative ritual inserted both the sacredness and spiritual life to the representational body of the deceased King. As a result, the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok was transformed into a sacred commemorative object and an artificial body of Prajadhipok, bearing his holiness as a semi-divine figure.[168] The ceremony ended with wreath laying from government representatives and other institutions.

After the unveiling, the constitution of the new memory of Prajadhipok as the Father of Thai Democracy was emphasised by the commemorative occasions. The Secretary-General of the National Assembly proposed that the cabinet give the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok the status of a National Monument, making it an institution of remembering. The statue would receive two annual wreath laying ceremonies: on 30th May, the anniversary of the King's death, and 10th December, Constitution Day (Hongsakun, 1986: 148). By engaging with the ritual of remembrance, the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok does not only enable the deceased King to have an everlasting presence in the public memory (Coser in Halbwachs, 1992: 23) but also control the way in which people would perceive him. These commemorations express the attempt to connect the deceased King with the birth of democracy, strengthening the royalist discourse of King Prajadhipok as the only true origin of the current political system.

As this chapter has demonstrated, the monarch in the post-1947 period appeared to be in alliance with democracy, not an enemy as he had been during the People's Party regime. The reincarnation of Prajadhipok and the re-contexualisation of his image from the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony transformed his political identity from the last absolutist King to the first democratic one. In a different manner to the King's image in the illustrated newspapers discussed in Chapter 1, the same image in statue form has stolen the political achievement from the People's Party and deleted their memory. Through particular historical moments of the post-1947 period, namely the rehabilitation of the King's status in the late

[167] Prem Tinsulanonda, born in 1920, refused to extend his premiership in 1988 but has served as Head of the Privy Council ever since.

[168] As in Hindu-Buddhist cultures, Thai death rituals and memorials convey a sacred dimension; the descendants of those who pass away would build *stupas* and/or use urn to hold the relics, and pray for blessing and guardianship. The monarch also has a tradition of making the Buddha statue as a representation and a tribute to their deceased ancestors. The historian Nidhi Eosiwong remarks that the concept of Western memorials imported to Thailand during the reign of Chulalongkorn, either involved with the living or the death, had been assimilated into Thai culture through the sacralisation process that transforms the memorial to a sacred object. See Eosiwong, Nidhi (1990) *Ibid*.

1940s, the 14th October Incident (1973) and the 6th October Massacre (1976), the re-contextualisation of the 10th December image suggested anti-revolutionary implications. As such, the construction of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok was in line with the current ruling order (Azaryahu, 1993); it served as a constitutional device in an ongoing process of construction of the royalist political memory that recognised Prajadhipok as the true begetter of Thai democracy, not the People's Party. The application of his image demonstrates the complexities of political conflict among ideological groups in Thai society during different periods. Prajadhipok's identity was constructed as opposed to the People's Party to cast the latter as a political scoundrel.

The examination of the return and the manipulation of Prajadhipok's legacy provide a chance to observe the potential of visual culture to become a driving force of historiography. It demonstrates the impact of the visual in constructing historical discourse as it has revealed the complication of (re)presenting the historical event as well as the passed-away political figure. The imaginative quality of images as well as the power of narrative has made the twist of the original meaning of 10th December 1932 possible. This twisted meaning of *ratthathmmanun* from the outcome of The People's Party's Revolution to Prajadhipok's offspring shed new light on the King and it has become a dominant discourse in both the Thai intelligentsia and Thai public consciousness. Being described as the noble and democratic-minded ruler, Prajadhipok has become a portmanteau figure of all virtues.

It has been shown that Prajadhipok's images are central to the constitution of the contested narratives. The Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok at the National Assembly makes the image of the monarchy, as opposed to that of the military dictators, politicians and communists, the last and the only pillar of political stability in Thailand. His image brought the deceased King back to life and expelled the memory of the People's Party to the realms of forgetfulness. In this reincarnation, the King did not just grant the constitution but the entire new political system defined by that constitution. Hence, the life after death of Prajadhipok has brought a second death to the People's Party, killing their memory from the public consciousness as the initiators of democracy. In this rebirth, the royal sovereignty that constituted the constitution and given the status of constitutional monarchy to the monarch did not decrease its power, on the contrary, it has given and justified him in a new and more powerful position: the King as the figure of benevolence.

The royalist historian, Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian, remarked that the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok was "physical evidence" of the rehabilitation of Prajadhipok's image; the King was no longer perceived as the last absolute monarch but the 'democratic-king as the

country could have ever wished for, a ruler who granted his people democracy and a constitution' (Suwannathat-Pian, 2003: 85). However, the latest political upheaval occurring since 2006 has revived the People's Party as the forefathers of Thai democracy and challenged the discourse of Prajadhipok, the Democratic King. The next chapter will concentrate on the revival of the People's Party's memory by the redshirt movement in the current political conflict. It will examine the role and function of three memorials built in the People's Party's regime, the People's Party's Plaque, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument and the Democracy Monument as sites of political activity. It interrogates how visual culture associates with the re-inclusion of the People's Party to the debates of the true begetters of Thai democracy.

Chapter 5

Nostalgia and Futuristic Utopia: The People's Party's Heritage and the Red Shirts

> Our understanding of the historical past is constructed not so much in the light of documentary evidence, but rather of the symbolic space or imaginative categories into which representations are fitted (Samuel, 2012: 381-382).

No longer "early ripped, early rotten", the 1932 Revolution re-emerged as the birth of Thai democracy in the aftermath of the 19th September 2006 coup d'état. On the morning of 24th June 2007, a group of NGOs such as NGO Coordinating Committee on Development (NGO-COD), Thai Labour Solidarity Committee, Four Regions Slum Network, Thai Volunteer Service Foundation and State-Enterprises Workers' Relation Confederation (SERC), Student Federation of Thailand (SFT) and the 19th September Network against Coup d'État[169], celebrated the 75th anniversary of the 1932 Revolution at the People's Party's Plaque (Fig. 68). This event was the first commemoration held at the People's Party's cultural heritage after the 2006 military coup.[170] The People's Party's Plaque, a symbol of the victory of the commoner in the political transformation, became a landmark for the protest against the coup that toppled the elected government of Thaksin Shinawatra.

The commemoration of the 1932 Revolution indicated that the current political conflict accelerated a new interpretation of the history of democracy in Thailand. It also marked the engagement of the People's Party's cultural heritage in a contemporary political movement. The commemoration began with the lighting of six candles, referring to the People's Party's Six Principles: Independence, Security, Economic, Equality, Liberty and Education, around the plaque and a reading of the Announcement of the People's Party's No. 1. Among other activities and speeches, the 19th September Network against Coup d'État read the Announcement of the 24th June 2007 declaring that the 1932 Revolution had yet to finish and was needed to be carried on until sovereign power truly belonged to the people

[169] The 19th September Network against Coup d'État is the first group to protest against the 2006 Coup. The members, mostly university students, gathered in front of Siam Paragon, the biggest shopping centre in Thailand and Asia, to announce the statement against the coup. The protestors dressed in black to mourn over the death of democracy. See Puenlansaekna (pseudonym) (2011) *Krung thep (mai) mi khon suea daeng* [There is (no) Redshirts in Bangkok], Bangkok: Aan. However, the first response against the coup was the hunger strike of Chalat Worachat and Thawi Kraikhup at the Democracy Monument on 20th September 2006. See http://www.prachatai.com/journal/2006/09/9732, Accessed 10th November 2011.

[170] It should be noted that the first event at the People's Party's Plaque was held in 2001 as part of a campaign against plans to move Thammasart University from its original location at Tha Prachan to the suburb of Rangsit. The People's Party founded Thammasart University in 1934 to be an educational institution in Moral and Political Science with Pridi Banomyong as its first rector. To claim a relationship with the People's Party, one of the activities was a tour to the People's Party's Plaque. This information was acquired through a conversation with Somsak Jeemtheerasakul and Saitip Khunin on Facebook on the 8th March 2011.

(Yingyong, 2011).[171] Memory implied a self or subject who perceived the memory or did remembering (Lambek, 1996); the commemoration of the People's Party's revolution in 2007 revivified the revolutionary as a source of inspiration and spiritual ancestor — a progenitor and guardian of democracy and established living connection with them as descendant and heir of the defunct tradition (Bloch, 1996; Nora, 1998). By claiming historical roots, the anti-coup protestors pictured the 1932 Revolution as an unfinished project for them to accomplish. Here, the revolutionary past appeared as the opposite image to the present. That image is an archetype: an ideal image, a fantasy of lost world that reflects the present desire (Samuel, 2012).[172]

As Benedict Anderson remarked, 'all profound changes in consciousness, by their very nature, bring with them characteristic amnesia' (1983: 204), the royalist-nationalism of the post-1947 suppressed the People's Party and the 1932 Revolution in order to reconstruct the monarchy as the progenitor of democracy. Whereas Chapter 4 examined the return of royalism and the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok as a solidified form of royalist democracy, this chapter addresses a counter-royalist democracy through the revivification of the long-forgotten People's Party and its cultural heritage by the anti-coup movement: the Red Shirts. Although the People's Party's monuments around Bangkok postulate the presence of the revolutionary in public places, the memory of the revolutionary has only achieved public presence in post-2006 politics. The war between the royalist democracy and the electoral democracy in the post-2006 era evoked a resurrection of the People's party to serve as the foundation for the Red Shirts protests. The re-emergence of the People's Party and its cultural heritage in public discourse thus closely associates with the current political turmoil.

The Red Shirts created an inter-relationship between the memory of the People's Party and the story of the movement. As current political movements engaged with the representations of the past (Taylor and Whittier, 1995; Rupp and Taylor, 2003), they

[171] See the full report of the event in Prachatai. http://prachatai.com/journal/2007/06/13222, Accessed 21st November 2011. However, most NGO participants had called for the King's intervention in politics prior to the coup. Somsak Kosaisuk, Secretariat of the Four Regions Slum Network and Rosana Tositrakul, President of the Traditional Medicine for Self-Curing Foundation later supported the royalist movement, the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) or the Yellow Shirt movement.

[172] In his elaboration on the use of the past in contemporary life, Raphael Samuel explained that there are two perceptions towards the past: the past as forerunner of the present in the linear continuity and development and the past as projection of an opposite image to the present. The second perception perceives the past as the revived and reconstructed image operated by the present. See Samuel, Raphael (2012) *Theatres of Memory. Past and Present in Contemporary Culture*, 1st revised edition, London and New York: Verso. The commemoration of the 1932 Revolution demonstrates both perceptions: the past as a prologue to the present but with interruption, hence, the lost world.

relocated the memory of the People's Party into the present Thai political landscape. By connecting the current political situation with the revolutionary days, the Red Shirts further inserted their struggle into the fabric of the memory of the People's Party. The past-present alignment between the People's Party and the Red Shirts suggests a historicisation of the latter since it reflects the movement's attempts to enter into historical record. Thus, the Red Shirts' revivification project added layers of meaning and a political dimension of the present time to the revolutionary memory. This chapter will discuss how the Red Shirts' self-historicisation as heirs of the revolutionary movement and warriors of democracy subsume the memory of the movement to the stream of Thai political history.

In so doing, the People's Party's monuments are conceived as an embodiment and tangible signifier of the revolutionary's ideology that the Red Shirts engage in their struggle against the military coup and royalist democracy. The concept of performativity (Butler, 1997; Jones and Stephenson, 1999) is central to an analysis of the role of the revolutionary visual culture in the Red Shirts' demonstrations. The Red Shirts' commemoration and activities at the People's Party's Plaque, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument and the Democracy Monument could be considered as physical forms of historiography as they served as performative agents in challenging royalist democracy — a counter-memory on the narrative of the true begetter of Thai democracy. Furthermore, these monuments served not only as a medium in the ideological and memorial restoration project, but also functioned as performative force in the Red Shirts' attempt to affirm their actions, to constitute their memory in the public consciousness. By implicitly adding the current political situation through the selection of moments to resurrect, the memory of the People's Party was not a purely unfolded memory excavated from the past but a memory that was shaded by the perspective and situation of the present. The memory of the People's Party is then altered and adapted to suit the present cause of the Red Shirts with the aim of employing it as a weapon against royalist democracy.

The cultural, historical and political specificities are core to the application of memory in a specific circumstance (Bloch, 1996: 229). This chapter explores the Red Shirts' operations on the revival of the People's Party's memory and the commemorative endeavours at the People's Party's Plaque, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument and the Democracy Monument between 2009 and 2010. As sites of memory (Nora, 1989), these spaces became more than just public gathering points and served as operational sites for political activity. As the intermediary agents between the past and the present (Azaryahu, 1993), they provided both symbolic and literal references to specific events that occurred in

the People's Party's regime that suited with the protestors' demands in each of their demonstrations.

The memories encapsulated in these sites reflected the aims of the movement to revive the significance and victory of the commoner: the People's Party's Plaque marks the success of the 1932 Revolution that changed the Thai political system from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument memorialises the victory of the People's Party over the Boworadet Rebellion in 1933 and the Democracy Monument celebrates the 1932 Revolution and the new-found democracy as the country's political system. The analysis of the Red Shirts' activities at the People's Party's memorial sites explores the performative efficacy of these sites in evolving strategies for dissent.

The notions of heritage and nostalgia provide interpretative frameworks for understanding the Red Shirts' historical consciousness and the movement's appropriation of the People's Party's cultural heritage. The issue of heritage in this chapter does not deal with preservation or conservation but appropriation in a specific political circumstance. Many scholars criticised heritage as sign of national decadence and kitsch. In the context of the post-war welfare state in Britain, Patrick Wright (1985), Robert Hewison (1987) and Peter Fowler (1992) accused the heritage boom of the 1980s as aristocratic-reactionary that illustrated a conservative, right-wing nostalgic vision on a form of Britishness. David Canadine (1988) argued that the heritage phenomenon is the mark of a sick society because it makes people obsessed with an idealised version of the nation's past instead of looking forward to the future. Heritage is a form of escapism, conservative in essence and therefore a symbol of national decline. It was also highly capitalist since it commoditised the past for tourist consumption (Johnson, 1993).

On the contrary, Raphael Samuel, a British Marxist historian and pioneer of "history from below" proposed that heritage is as much about the ordinary as about the elite.[173] Samuel (2012) redirected the debates on heritage by arguing that people's fascination with the past has opened space for "public history" because it values local history and knowledge.

[173] Raphael Samuel who proposed historians to see heritage as educational resource for public history discussed criticism on heritage by the mentioned scholars extensively. See Samuel, Raphael (2012) *ibid*. See also Wright, Patrick (1985) *On Living in an Old Country: The National Past in Contemporary Britain*, London: Verso; Hewison, Robert (1987) *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline*, London: Methuen Publishing Ltd; Fowler, Peter (1992) *The Past in Contemporary Society: Then, Now*, London: Routledge; Cannadine, David (1988) 'The Past in the Present' in Smith, Lesley M. (ed.) *Echoes of Greatness*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, p. 9-20 and Johnson, Richard (1993) *'Heritage and History'*, cyclostyled paper and presentation, Amsterdam, 2nd October 1993.

Heritage, as terrain for unofficial history and memory, may open a new way to construct a "history from below", local knowledge and identity of the minority. As such, heritage is a cultural asset that can be used progressively, challenging the official history of the nation, status quo and existing class distinctions. In this sense, the conservative ideology embedded within the notion of heritage seemed to open the way for progression and fantasy of the future. This chapter discusses the Red Shirts' appropriation of revolutionary heritage in the movement's struggle for democracy. It presents heritage as a means for achieving the revolutionary aim.

Similar to heritage, nostalgia, a longing for place and a yearning for a different time has been perceived as illness,[174] escapism (Kammen, 1991) and aesthetic failure (Maier, 1999). In her study of nostalgia, Svetlana Boym (2001) proposed a notion of "off-modern" to describe a place of nostalgia in modern condition.[175] She argued that nostalgia is not always antithetical to progress. It is not only retrospective but also prospective because fantasy of the past may have a direct impact on the dream of the future. According to Boym, nostalgia is paradoxical because it appears as a defensive mechanism to seek a solution to current problems.

Boym distinguished two types of nostalgia: "restorative nostalgia" and "reflective nostalgia". Restorative nostalgia highlights *nostos*, return home, but reflective nostalgia concerns *algia*, the longing itself — melancholy, yet these distinctions are not always distinguishable. Restorative nostalgia is central to national and religious revivals. It aims at constructing a trans-historical lost home because it does not consider itself as nostalgia but as truth or tradition (2001: 41). In the case of the Red Shirts, the resurrection of erased memory of the People's Party and the emotional bonding as ascendant-descendant indicates a longing for the revolutionary past and a desire to rebuild it for a better future.

The following section provides a background to the Thai political conflict after the 2006 coup in relation to the reawakening of the People's Party ghost. The emergence of "colour-coded politics" (Chachavalpongpun, 2014) between the Yellow Shirt movement and

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[174] In 1688, Swiss student Johannes Hofer coined the term "nostalgia" from the Greek words *nostos* (return home) and *algia* (longing) to describe homesickness as medical condition. Hofer, Johannes (1934) 'Medical Dissertation on Nostalgia,' translated by Carolyn Kiser Anspach in *Bulletin of the Institute of the History of Medicine,* vol. 2, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press. For a study of nostalgia, see for example, Steward, Susan (1985) *On Longing*, Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press; Lowenthal, David (1985) *The Past is a Foreign Country*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Steiner, George (1974) *Nostalgia for the Absolute*, Toronto: CBC and Huyssen, Andreas (1995) *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia*, New York and London: Routledge,

[175] Svetlana's *The Future of Nostalgia* is a multidisciplinary study on nostalgia. Boym explores a relationship between nostalgic longing and futuristic thinking as well as personal memory and collective memory. See Boym, Svetlana (2001) *The Future of Nostalgia*, New York: Basic Books.

Red Shirt movement is not only a war between royalist democracy and electoral democracy (Winichakul, 2014) but also a war of memory: who would be the true begetter and embodiment of Thai democracy.

Colour-Coded Politics: The Thai Crisis Post-2006

Winning two landslide elections in 2001 and 2005, business tycoon turned politician Thaksin Shinawatra was the first and the only prime minister to serve the full four-year term in Thai history. Despite its negative reputation due to alleged cases of high-profile corruption and human rights abuses, Shinawatra's political party (under different names from 2001 to 2014) had cultivated strong loyalty from the rural poor in the north and northeast regions from the populist policies that were beneficial to the lower classes. The rise of Shinawatra's political strength intimidated the traditional elites, the upper and the middle classes in Bangkok (Winichakul, 2014; Chachavalpongpun, 2014). Consequently, the anti-Shinawatra movement, known as the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) (Yellow Shirts) emerged in early 2005. Yellow, the colour of the House of Chakri and King Bhumibol's birthday[176] was used as a symbolic tie between the movement and the monarch. The PAD, led by Sondhi Limthongkul, the media mogul of the Manager Group, consisted of various social groups including the elite, the middle classes, political activists from the 1970s and the 1990s and public intellectuals, called the prime minister to resign from office and for power to be returned to the King' under Article 7 of the 1997 constitution (Connors, 2007: 270).

Although the palace remained silent, on 14th July 2006, General Prem Tinsulanonda, statesman, former prime minister and President of the King's Privy Council, delivered a speech to the cadets of the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy in Nakhon Nayok to remind them that their loyalty was to the crown and the country, not to the government. Tinsulanonda, appearing in his old cavalry uniform with boots and spurs, drew a parallel between the military and a horse. He asserted that 'a government is like a jockey. It supervises soldiers, but the real owners are the country and the King' (Manager Online, 14th July 2006). Two months later, a military junta, the Council for Democratic Reform (CDR), led by General Sonthi Boonyaratglin staged a coup to overthrow Shinawatra's government

[176] In Thailand, each day of the week has a specific colour: yellow (Monday), pink (Tuesday), green (Wednesday), orange (Thursday), blue (Friday), purple (Saturday) and red (Sunday). Yellow has become popular among Thais since 2005, one year prior to the celebration of the Sixtieth Anniversary Celebrations of His Majesty's Accession to the Throne on 9th June 2006.

on 19th September 2006.[177] Shinawatra has been forced to live in exile ever since. The soldiers received a warm welcome from the public, flowers were given to them and yellow ribbons adorned their tanks and rifles.

With royal approval, the CDR, which later became the Council for National Security (CNS), appointed Surayudh Chulanont, a former Supreme Commander of the Royal Thai Army and member of the Privy Council to be interim prime minister. The CNS promised to organise a national election within twelve months and the Constitutional Tribunal dissolved Shinawatra's party, Thai Rak Thai (Thais Love Thais, aka TRT) in May 2007. However, Palung Prachachon (People's Power Party, aka PPP) emerged as the successor party to TRT and won the general election in December 2007. Two PPP leaders, former Bangkok governor Samak Sundaravej and Shinawatra's brother-in-law, Somchai Wongsawat were joint prime ministers for a short period in 2008. The royalist PAD accused both of them as Shinawatra's nominees and therefore engineered mass street demonstrations. The PAD further seized the Government House as well as Don Mueang and Suvarnabhumi International Airports. PPP was finally dissolved by the verdict of the Constitutional Court in December 2008. The conservative, right-wing Democrat Party, under their leader Abhisit Vejjajiva, eventually formed a Democrat-led coalition government with the clandestine support of top army generals, royal advisers and business leaders as well as the upper-class and the middle-class bureaucrats – in short, a collective, behind-the-scenes push by the royalists and the PAD (The Nation, 17th December 2008).

Despite being called a "good coup", the 2006 coup did not only overturn the progress towards democracy that Thailand had enjoyed since the 1990s but also created an anti-establishment movement and anti-monarchy sentiments among many Thais (Chachavalpongpun, 2014: 4). The coup and abrogation of Shinawatra's parties clearly

[177] The CNS detailed Shinawatra's wrongdoings in a document "White Paper" to legitimise the coup as corruption, abuse of power, infringement of ethics and moral integrity of country leader, interference in political check systems, human rights violations and destroying national unity. See a summary in the report 'What Thaksin had done wrong' in *The Nation*, http://nationmultimedia.com/2006/11/22/headlines/headlines_30019 578.php, Accessed 5th December 2014. Giles Ji Ungpakorn, a professor of political sciences at Chulalongkorn University and political activist saw it as the outcome of class conflicts between the rural poor who supported Shinawatra and the urban elite and middle-class who supported the military, see 'Thailand's coup leaders suppressed democratic rights' in *World Socialist Website*, 25th September 2006, http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2006/09/thai-s25.html, Accessed 5th December 2014. Another professor of political sciences from the same university, Thitinan Pongsudhirak thought that the coup was due to the growing gulf between the King and Shinawatra, see 'Thai king remains centre stage' in *BBC*, 21st September 2006, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/5367936.stm, Accessed 5th December 2014. Asia Sentinel, a web-based Asian regional publication, reported that the coup was staged to prevent Shinawatra from being in position when Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn succeeded to the throne, see 'What the Thai coup was really about' in *Asia Sentinel*, 6th November 2006, http://www.asiasentinel.com/politics/what-the-thai-coup-was-really-about/, Accessed 5th December 2014.

unmasked the elites' disapproval of popular sovereignty and majority rule (Ferrara, 2014: 19). These operations stirred up a widespread awakening of political consciousness among Thai people, especially the rural poor who had long been neglected and kept silent in the national political field. They were the main supporters of Shinawatra's parties and were later members of the Red Shirt movement. The dissolution of TRT in May 2007 led to a protest by thousands of people at Sanam Luang. One month later, 22 anti-coup groups and about 60 former TRT members founded the United Front of Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD).[178] The movement took Sanam Lunag as a protest base (Nostitz, 2014: 176-177, 194).

The anti-coup movement adopted the colour red as the symbol of the movement. The origin of the use of red by the Red Shirts took place in March 2007 when Sombat Bunngamanong, aka "Bo Ko Lai Jut" (Polka Dot Editor), a political activist, NGO organiser and second-generation leader of UDD, organised a campaign against the constitution of 2007. He asked the protestors to wear red t-shirts with the slogan "Vote No" to vote against the constitution. According to Bunngamanong, the colour red is used internationally for rejecting referenda while green is used to show acceptance, thus, he selected red as the symbol of anti-coup activities. Red is also the international colour of revolution, for example, the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 and the Chinese Revolution in 1949. Both revolutions associated red with communism and therefore, clearly stated an eradication of social hierarchy. The colour gained popularity among protestors and gradually became the symbolic colour of the movement (Srikhao, 2011: 95-98). However, the official use of red by the Red Shirts is marked in their first massive gathering at Muang Thong Thanee on 11th October 2008. The Red Shirts became a massive political movement as a result of *ta sawang* (awakened from blindness or enlightened) phenomenon.

Ta sawang phenomenon was a collective shock that preceded the crisis of legitimacy (Girardet, 1986). It was a result of Queen Sirikit sending a wreath to the funeral of PAD member Angkhana (Bo) Radappanyawut on 9th October 2008. Consequently, the Queen and Princess Chulabhorn attended the funeral on 13th October 2008. The Queen said to her family that the 28-year-old Radappanyawut was a "good girl" and a "protector of the monarchy and the country" (Matichon Online, 14th October 2008). Since none of the royal members attended the funeral of Red Shirts in the earlier clashes in September, the royal presence at Radappanyawut's funeral made clear that the monarchy took sides with the PAD. This act

[178] The name later changed to the National United Front of Democracy Against Dictatorship (NUDD) in August 2007 but the international press still referred to it as "UDD". There is another name, "Democratic Alliance against Dictatorship" (DADD) too. See http://siamfreedomfight.blogspot.com/2010/01/story-of-udd-nudd.html, Accessed 7th September 2011.

led to the rise of the rural poor in the Thai political field. The 13th October was an historical moment, a crucial point in Thai politics that divided Thai people into two distinctive sides: the Yellow Shirts with explicit support from the monarchy, and the Red Shirts (Jeamteerasakul, 2010; Puenlansaekna, 2011).

However, the Red Shirt movement consisted not only of the rural poor but also members of the middle class, elites, students, and activists as well as a handful of intellectuals. It was not a united movement as many Red Shirts were not Shinawatra followers but were simply pro-democracy (Chachavalpongpun, 2014: 11), they protested against the illegal seizure of power by the establishment. The accumulation of unjust claims and practices – from toppling the elected governments based on their antipathy towards Shinawatra, to accusing those who voted for Shinawatra's parties, mainly the rural poor, as uneducated and thus fooled by politicians – suggested that the establishment did not accept the voice of the majority expressed through elections. The people's votes for Thaksin's parties, be it TRT, PPP or its latest incarnation, the Pheu Thai Party (PT), though massive, were disqualified since they came from the lower stratum of society. The Red Shirt movement thus started campaigning for the right to vote and for genuine equality of every citizen: everybody has the right to cast a vote and everyone's vote is equal in power regardless of the voter's education or income level.

The Red Shirts' struggle for equal rights was presumably one of the conditions for the restoration of the People's Party. Whereas one of the revolutionaries' Six Principles, Equality, strongly supported an empowerment of people with the expansion of democracy, the core concept of the 1932 Revolution that had stated that the people were the centre of the nation identified them as the true owners of the country. As such, the People's Party became a fertile ground for the movement; the struggle for equal citizenship from the 1930s was paired with the fight for the right to vote whilst electoralism replaced constitutionalism (Ferrara, 2014: 35). The People's Party thus perfectly aligned with the protestors' call for electoral politics and equal rights: the entries into the political state of the hitherto right-less plebeian (*phrai*).[179] The following sections examine the Red Shirts' activities at the People's Party's Plaque, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument and the Democracy Monument to investigate how the movement evoked the People's Party's memory as they confronted difficulties in the political conflict.

[179] The Red Shirt leader, Nattawut Saikua created the discourse "*phrai* versus *ammat*" (plebeian, commoner versus aristocrat) in 2011. The Red Shirts used it in their protest against the minority groups of elite and the royalist networks that toppled the elected government. See Srikhao, Fahroong (2011) *Suphap Burut Phrai Nattawut Saikua* [The gentleman plebeian: Nattawut Saikua], Bangkok: Matichon.

The People's Party's Plaque: The Rebirth of the People's Power

On 24th June 2009, the UDD organised a commemorative event "Asking for Democracy, Seeking for the Thai National Day" at the People's Party's Plaque (Fig. 69).[180] At 6.05am around 100 Red Shirts gathered at the plaque to celebrate the 77th anniversary of the 1932 Revolution and to commemorate the former National Day. A piece of white paper cut into the form of the Democracy Monument, adorned with red candles as if it was a birthday cake, was placed beside the plaque. The message, written in red ink on a piece of paper, reads, "Democracy, Liberty, Equality" (Fig. 70). It was the motto for the fight for electoral democracy with liberty and equality as central principles (Yingyong, 2011). The commemoration in 2009 started with a speech by Somyot Pruksakasemsuk,[181] one of the Red Shirt leaders, about the importance of 24th June as the revolution day and the National Day. He informed the participants that the military government of Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat changed the National Day from 24th June to 5th December, Bhumibol's birthday in 1960. Yet he insisted that this protest did not aim to change the National Day back to 24th June but to bring back the memory of the transitional moment from absolute monarchy to democracy. The commemoration aimed to raise awareness of the equal rights that Thais had been given by the revolution.

Although the official Thai history under royalist rule had suppressed the memory of the 1932 Revolution, the People's Party's memory, which, in this case, was the People's Party's Plaque, functioned as mode of unofficial knowledge (Samuel, 2012). As site for memory in which the past may be recalled (Nora, 1989), the People's Party's Plaque was a mechanism in the competing politics of memory. The commemorative plaque, which was attached to the ground of the Royal Plaza on Ratchadamnoen Avenue in 1936, served as visual evidence of the revolutionary victory in 1932. The existence of the plaque insisted that the People's Party was the birth-giver of people's sovereignty, countering the royalist discourse that cast Prajadhipok as the Father of Thai democracy.

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[180] For the full report of the commemoration, see http://www.prachatai.com/journal/2009/06/24830, Accessed 8th September 2011.

[181] Somyot Pruksakasemsuk is an NGO, a leader of the 24th June for Democracy Group and an editor in chief of Voice of Thaksin Magazine. He was charged with lèse-majesté (Article 112) on 30th March 2011 and remains in prison until now. His son, Panithan Pruksakasemsuk (also known as Tai), went on a 112-hour hunger strike in front of the Criminal Court, lasting from 11th to 16th February 2012, to call on the judge to free his father. See http://www.prachatai.com/journal/2012/02/39243, Accessed 2nd March 2012. In 2014, Ai Weiwei, a Chinese contemporary artist and activist selected Pruksakasemsuk to be one of 176 current prisoners of conscience from around the world and presented his story in *@Large: Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz* on Alcatraz island, San Francisco, USA. The exhibition, on view from 27th September 2014 to 26th April 2015, raised questions about freedom of expression and human rights. For more details, see aiweiweialcatraz.org, Accessed 1st May 2015.

Memory always played an important role in the construction of collective identity and is often employed in social and political action (Wither, 1996). The ideal image of the past is the mental image we employ to solve present problems (Coser, 1992: 34) and therefore capable of being mobilised for contemporary symbolic purposes (Connors, 2007: 5). For the Red Shirts, the 1932 Revolution offered the original form of Thai democracy while the plaque provided a point of reference, proof of the commoner's victory. Directly engaged with the contemporary political crisis, the Red Shirts' commemoration re-evaluated the 1932 Revolution as the model of triumph of the people's revolution, but this time the opponent was a royalist democracy, not royal absolutism as in 1932. Hence, the plaque was transformed into a potent symbol for the movement's call for electoral politics.

Heritage is also source and marker of identity (Peleggi, 2002b). As the plaque marked a spot where Phahon, the head of the Military Faction and leader of the People's Party, declared a new political system for the country, the Red Shirts repeated this performative act on the very same spot; Suwit Loetkraimethi, a student at Thammasart University and former head of the 19th September Network against the Coup d'État performed a reading of the Announcement of the People's Party's No. 1 to remind the protesters that Thais were no longer "subjects" under the King's ruling but "citizens" (Yingyong, 2011).[182] Loetkraimethi's reading rediscovered the virtue of the people's voice as a sovereign power in the democratic society conceived by the revolutionaries in 1932 and, in relation to that, constructed a political identity for the Red Shirt members. With the commemorative power of the plaque, the reading of the People's Party's announcement in 2009 re-addressed and re-engaged the importance of ordinary people, the citizen of the state, to the Thai nation. Furthermore, it created ancestral bonds between the People's Party and the Red Shirts. It constructed a connective narrative as it conceptualised the revolutionaries as their forebears, ideological ancestors and role models. The Red Shirts' commemorative act at the People's Party's Plaque reaffirmed continuity with the revolutionary past as a source or origin of political legitimacy.

[182] Loetkraimethi asked for the use of the people's sovereignty to make his reading equal to everyone's reading. He provided three reasons for being representative of the participants: as a student of Thammasart University which was a legacy of the People's Party, as a protestor who has fought with others from the beginning of the anti-coup movement and as a Thai citizen who has sovereignty, equality and liberty. He dedicated this reading to all who had fought for democracy in every political event from the past to the present, to Suphot Dantrakun, a historian who had spent his whole career defending the 1932 Revolution as the beginning of Thai democracy, and to the Red Shirts who had confronted the government in clashes in April 2009. Loetkraimethi performed a reading again at the gathering at Sanam Luang in the same evening. Conversation with Metee Yingyong on Facebook, 8th March 2011.

The act of reading demonstrated a retrospective sense of belonging to an idealised heroic past (Samuel, 1998). Yet, Loetkraimethi's act of reading of the People's Party's announcement was not merely an imitation of Phahon's act. Whereas Phahon held an authoritative position, his speech act was a performative utterance (Austin, 1976) that enacted the act of revolution and therefore declared the transformation of Siam into constitutionalist state. Loetkraimethi, on the contrary, was a Red Shirt protestor, who was fighting against a royalist democracy in an ongoing crisis. His reading was to boost revolutionary spirit among the Red Shirts in their march towards democracy. It implied that democracy is a work-in-progress. Loetkraimethi's act was an expression of the protestors' longing for a revolutionary victory. In this context, the People's Party's Plaque has transmuted from marker of revolutionary victory to platform of ideological protest.

The picture of the Democracy Monument as birthday cake besides the plaque underlined 24th June 1932 as a moment for celebration. Similar to the People's Party's Plaque, the Democracy Monument, unveiled on 24th June 1940, is a monument to celebrate the democracy that the People's Party had brought to the country (the Red Shirts' political activity at the actual monument will be discussed in the following section). Also located on Ratchadamnoen Avenue, the presence of a representation of the Democracy Monument in the Red Shirts' commemoration at the People's Party's Plaque highlighted the importance of this particular area as a space of political contestation. Putting together two symbols of the 1932 Revolution, the People's Party's Plaque and a picture of the Democracy Monument, provided a double emphasis on the power of the revolutionary heritage in the war between the people's sovereignty and royalist democracy. For the Red Shirts these sites were sources of power and strength that they wished to connect with. The Red Shirts' use of these heritages stressed a nostalgic reminiscence to the revolutionary glorious past.

The Red Shirts' yearning for the 1932 Revolution indicated utopian dimensions of nostalgia. However, this was not a conservative "reactionary nostalgia" (Wright, 1985) but progressive "restorative nostalgia" (Boym, 2001) that offered a retrospective vision of the preferred present and future. The commemoration on 24th June 2009 reflected what Fredric Jameson (1991) called "nostalgia for the present", a paradoxical desire of recalling the past for progression. Restorative nostalgia fantasised the role in the present of a particular, determinate past as an origin to return to and a departure to go on: the 1932 Revolution as the "beginning" of an unfinished project. Here, the revolutionary past that was embodied in both the People's Party's Plaque and the picture of the Democracy Monument, provided a perfect snapshot for the present political movement to desire, and, at the same time, an unfinished

mission to accomplish. In this context, royalist democracy became an obstacle, an interruption of progress to democracy that the Red Shirts aimed to overcome (Chachavalpongpun, 2014: 4).

The performative power of the revolutionary heritage actively engaged with a democratic process of extending and challenging the domination of the oligarchy by those who have been cast out of the political sphere (Rancière, 2009: 54). One of the activities at the commemoration was a launch of a Red Shirts publication, D-magazine, in which "D" stood for "Democracy" by the People's Writer and Artist Democracy network (PWAD) (Fig. 71). PWAD consisted of many writers and poets such as Wat Walayangkul and Mainueng K. Kunthee (pseudonym).[183]

The cover of D-magazine, with bold typographic letters and geographic pattern, showed the half-face of a farmer with a red eye that had a picture of *phan ratthathammanun* in the pupil. The designer of the cover was unknown. The cover of D-magazine implies the Red Shirts' perception on art and design as practices for social purposes: the desire for a revolution to demolish class hierarchy. The picture of *phan ratthathammanun*, a revolutionary symbol of democracy in the eye of a farmer, signified both a perspective and an aim of the Red Shirts; as right-less plebeians, they were struggling to redress the wrong of the miscount (Rancière, 1999), to be recognised and exist as political subjects. The picture thus signified the revolutionary concept of people's sovereignty. Furthermore, a striking sentence on the magazine cover "Grass roots are no fool" countered the royalist PAD's accusation of the rural poor voting for Shinawatra. It emphasised an attempt to destroy class distinction and discrimination: everyone including the poor have the right to vote and have their votes to be counted.

As such, the cover of D-magazine transformed the Red Shirts from right-less plebeians to "radical democratic citizens" — active citizens who conceived themselves as participants in a political undertaking (Mouffe, 1992: 235). The poet Mainueng K. Kunthee read the poem "Yam Rung Mithuna" (The Dawn of June) to encourage the Red Shirts to fight for the democracy that had been granted by the revolutionaries but was stolen by the monarchy's network of elites. The end of the poem called for the people's revolution.[184] The commemoration[185] ended at 7.00am with candle lighting, scattering of red rose petals around

[183] Mainueng K. Kunthee or Kamol Duangphasuk was shot dead by two men on motorcycles on 23rd April 2014. The case remains unresolved.
[184] See the poem at http://prachatai.com/journal/2009/06/24814, Accessed 22nd November 2011.
[185] The Red Shirts' commemoration of the 1932 Revolution bears a strong resemblance to Bolshevik celebrations in the 1920s. The post-revolutionary regime actively operated a countrywide propaganda campaign

the People's Party's Plaque and the picture of the Democracy Monument and a minute of silence. Before the disbandment, some shouted, "don't die before becoming a citizen" and "Red citizen" (Prachatai, 24th June 2009).[186]

By projecting the People's Party as a true birth-giver of Thai democracy, the Red Shirts' revival of the revolutionary past emphasised the triumph of the commoner in changing Thailand's political system. The next section discusses the Red Shirts' commemoration at another People's Party's heritage — the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument on the 12th March 2010. Similar to the People's Plaque, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument had been a dead relic until the intense political contestation of the post-2006 coup brought it back into the public consciousness. As a symbol of the People's Party's victory over the royalist Boworadet Rebellion (1933), the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument featured in the Red Shirts' prolonged series of protests against the unelected, military-backed Democrat Party government of Abhisit Vejajiva between March and May 2010. What follows is an analysis of the performative power of the monument in relation to the Red Shirt's ritual performance before a mass demonstration on the 14th March 2010.

The Safeguarding the Constitution Monument: The Fighting Spirit

As previously mentioned, Abhisit Vejajiva, leader of the Democrat Party, rose to power after the Constitutional Court had removed Prime Minister Somchai Wongsawat of PPP in December 2008. The Red Shirts protested against this unelected government throughout 2009. On the 12th March 2010, the UDD announced the plan "12th March, 12 O' Clock, Beat the Drum and Horrify the Aristocracy" for Red Shirts all over the country to perform cursing rituals before marching to Bangkok for a mass demonstration on Sunday

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to celebrate the October revolution in 1917. Monuments and public places were essential elements in the glorification of the Bolshevik achievement. See for example, Fitzpatrick, Sheila (1992) *The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia*, New York: Cornell University Press; Bown, Matthew Cullerne and Taylor, Brandon (eds.) (1993) *Art of the Soviets: Painting, Sculpture and Architecture in a One-Party State, 1917-1992,* Manchester: Manchester University Press; Von Geldern, James (1993) *Bolshevik Festivals, 1917-1920,* Berkeley and London: University of California Press and Velikanova, Olga (2013) *Popular Perceptions of Soviet Politics in the 1920s: Disenchantment of the Dreamers*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

[186] From 2009 onwards, the commemoration of 24th June 1932 has continued yearly but after the military coup led by General Prayuth Chan-o-cha, Commander of the Royal Thai Army on 22nd May 2014 was launched against the government of Yingluck Shinawatra, younger sister of Thaksin (5th August 2011-22nd May 2014), the commemoration in 2014 was placed under surveillance. The police stated that the commemoration must not involve the current politics otherwise it would be considered as illegal. http://www.prachatai.com/journal/2014/06/54203, Accessed 18th May 2015.

14th March (Komchadluek, 8th March 2010). The demonstration demanded the dissolution of parliament and new elections. Brahmin priest Sakraphi Phrommachat explained that the time 12.12.12 was an auspicious moment for defeating *ammat* (aristocracy). For the protestors in Bangkok, 3,500 Red Shirts under leadership of Veera Musikapong and Weng Tojirakarn performed cursing rituals by burning salt and dried chillies at the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument (Prachatai, 12th March 2010) (Fig. 72). There was also a Brahman ceremony to pay respect to, and ask for blessings from, the spirits of members of the People's Party, the 17 soldiers and policemen who died in the battle with the Boworadet Rebellion and King Taksin the Great.[187] Here, rituals functioned as commemoration as well as ancestor worship, framing narrative of past experience as the movement's hope for a successful future (Snow and Benford, 1988; Summers-Effler, 2002; Hurd, 2014).[188]

Whereas the People's Party's government held the annual war commemoration at the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument to honour the 17 fallen as national heroes, the Red Shirts' commemoration at the same place, which was performed by a civil society, was an act of resurrection. The fall of the revolutionary regime and the negative perception of the People's Party in the post-1947 era led to a devaluation of the 17 fallen whose ashes were enshrined in the monument. There was no evidence of accusing them as villains in history as the People's Party, rather, they have been, like the monument itself, forgotten. Similar to a commemoration at the People's Party's Plaque in 2009, the UDD's commemoration at the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument in 2010 did not only retrieve the dead from the grave of oblivion but also bestowed upon them new status as ideological ancestors.

Nostalgia reappears as a defence mechanism in a time of historical upheaval (Boym, 2001). The sacrifice of the 17 fallen in fighting the royalist Boworadet Rebellion provided inspiration to the Red Shirts' struggle against the royalists. The Red Shirts' commemoration was not only an act of restoration but also an act of recreation. It established coalescence between the Red Shirts and the 17 fallen as warriors of democracy. As such, the revival of

[187] It is notable that the Red Shirts included King Taksin the Great in the commemoration. King Taksin the Great had ruled over the Thonburi Kingdom (1768-1782) but was executed by a friend who later became King Phutthayotfa Chulalok the Great, the first King of the Chakri dynasty, and ancestor of Bhumibol. Yet, to mention him here may not only be conceived as an act of opposition to the current dynasty but also implicated a contemporary; the King's name "Taksin" was very close to Thaksin Shinawatra.

[188] Many scholars have investigated the role of rituals in relation to collective emotion. They argued that rituals constituted collective remembering and therefore provided narratives of past experiences for social movements. See Snow, David A. and Robert D. Benford (1988) 'Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization' *International Social Movement Research* 1(1), pp. 197-217; Summers-Effler, Erika (2002) 'The Micro Potential for Social Change: Emotion, Consciousness, and Social Movement Formation' *Sociological Theory* 20, pp. 1:41-60 and Hurd, Madeleine (2014) 'Introduction: Social Movements − Ritual, Space and Media' *Cultural Unbound: Journal of Current Cultural research*, Vol. 6, 2014, pp. 287-303.

the past and the struggling present co-existed and strengthen each other, as ascendants and descendants were bounded by the same political ideology. The commemoration at the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument by the Red Shirts thus signified an act of ancestor worship because it produced an idealised character of the other from the past as well as solidarity with them (Samuel, 1998).

Nationalism may be considered as a system of patrilineal kinship where national heroes are seen as noble ancestors (Anderson, 1983). Therefore, contesting nationalism and national history means challenging national genealogy (Verdery, 1999). In the midst of Thailand's crisis of sovereignty, the repositioning of the People's Party and the 17 fallen as the Red Shirts' ideological ancestors—democracy—contested the Thai royalist national history of the post-1947 period. It did not only dispute the discourse of the monarchy as the origin and guardian of democracy, rather it also implied that it was the obstacle of democracy.

As such, the Red Shirts' commemoration of the 17 forgotten heroes in relation to the protest against the government indicated an obsession with an idealised past and emotional energy of hope for futuristic utopia — the people's revolution. In this circumstance, the victory of the People's Party in 1933 emerged as "political myth", a narrative of a particular group that concerns 'a political society that existed or was created in the past and which must now be restored or preserved' (Tudor, 1972: 138-139) while the revolutionary heritage served as a place of memory that may lend the protestors bravery and vigour. Tradition and spiritual belief came into a play as commemorative devices for connecting with the dead and emboldening the protestors before a mass demonstration on the 14th March.

The Safeguarding the Constitution Monument was a site saturated with historical and political values. According to Pierre Nora (1989), a site of memory is a mnemonic site that functions as catalyst for collective acts of remembrance. However, a site of memory, be it memorial, monument or other built environment, is always open to multiple interpretations (Hoelscher, 1998; Moore, 2000). New meanings and status can be conferred to sites of memory. In the case of the Red Shirts, the commemoration as an act of ancestor worship and ritual performance at the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument on the 12th March has constituted the site as a sacred place, a kind of shrine, suggesting a performative efficacy of the site as source of double-edged supernatural power: to bless the Red Shirt protestors and to enhance the curse to their enemy.

At the auspicious moment of 12.12.12, the Brahmin Priest performed the salt spell and dried chilli spell to curse Vejajiva's government. According to *The Art of War, Military*

Organization, Weapons and Political Maxim of the Ancient Hindus, a Hindu military treatise translated and complied by Phra Sarasasana Balakhandh (G. E. Gerini), the Director of the Cadet School (now Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy) and the General Director of Military Education during the reign of Chulalongkorn (2005, first published in 1894), a cursing ritual that takes the form of burning salt and dried chillies may derive from Hindu cursing practices. A salt spell is performed to curse the enemy; in the evening, a performer turns to the west, curses an enemy and throws salt into a fire where it burns up. Similarly, a chilli spell is to burn dried chillies to metaphorically burn an enemy, creating burning pain just like the effects of hot chilli. In the Red Shirts' cursing performance, a white wooden box with red words "Cremating the Evil Aristocrats" was used for burning salt and dried chillies (Fig. 73). The box, which looked like a coffin, signified that this cursing ritual was a dead spell. Being a mechanism of cursing performance, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument, which was a symbol of the commoner's triumph over the royalist aristocracy in 1933, served the Red Shirts' interests as a mechanism of supernatural power.

As mentioned earlier, the Red Shirts all over the country performed this cursing ritual at the same time to boost their spirit before marching to Bangkok. This can be understood as "collective rituals" (Bosco, 2001: 315)[189] that protestors performed to reinforce the power of cursing. Rituals increased group solidarity and emotional engagement (Durkheim, 1915; Jasper, 1997; Pàez *et al.*, 1997; Manning, 1998; Berstain *et al*., 2000).[190] This collective action across space thus created a cohesive communal bond between the protestors, despite performing in different and distant locations before heading to the capital. The performing curse became a form of political resistance and strategy to create a bond between protestors who shared the same ideology and desire. In this sense, the Red Shirt movement was a form

[189] Fernando J. Bosco addressed the role of spatial dimension of network of relations in in linking local activism across different contexts in his analysis of the strategies of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo movement. He categorised it as place-based rituals. See Bosco, Fernando J. (2001) 'Place, Space, Networks, and the Sustainability of Collective Action: The Madres de Plaza de Mayo' *Global Networks: A Journal of Transnational Affairs* 1, no. 4, pp. 307–29. This chapter applied Bosco's term "collective rituals across space" to explain the spatial dimension of the redshirts' ritual performance around the country; it was not only to create social network but also to enhance the curse.

[190] Émile Durkheim, a French sociologist introduced a concept "collective effervescence" to explain moments when group of individuals that made up a society come together perform religious ritual. For him, rituals created collective effervescence that served to unify a group of individuals. See Durkheim, Émile (1915) *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, London: Allen & Unwin. Scholars further developed Durkheim's idea of rituals in forming solidarity to a study of social movement. See for example, Jasper, James (1997) *The Art of Moral Protest: Culture, Biography, and Creativity in Social Movements*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press; Páez, Dario *et al*. (1997) 'Social Processes and Collective Memory' in Pennebaker, J.W., Páez, Dario and Rimé, Bernard (eds) *Collective Memory of Political Events*, Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Ehrlbaum; Manning, Kathleen (2000) *Rituals, Ceremonies, and Cultural Meaning in Higher Education,* Westport, Ct.: JF Bergin & Garvey and Berstain, Carlos *et al*. (2000) 'Rituals, Social Sharing, Silence, Emotions and Collective Memory Claims' *Psicothema*, 12, pp. 117-130

of imagined community (Anderson, 1983) whose members shared aims and anger towards the coup and its consequential governments.

Unfortunately, the Red Shirts' ritual performance could not derive power from the revolutionary glorious past. In Thailand under royalist rule, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument was dysfunctional and powerless. As the fall of the People's Party in 1947 had led to a defamation of all revolutionary legacy; the Red Shirts were intertwined with their forebears, the People's Party and the 17 fallen, as losers in the sovereignty disputes. After the mass demonstration at the military stronghold on the 14th March, UDD protests mainly centred at Phan Fa Lilat Bridge on Ratchadamnoen Avenue and the Ratchaprasong intersection. Consequently, the government declared a state of emergency, banning political assemblies of more than five people and set up the Centre for Resolution of Emergency Situation (CRES) on 7th April (Ratchakitchanubeksa, Vol. 127, Special Episode 45, 7th April 2010: 3-6). The CRES was based at the Infantry Regiment (RAB 11) campus where Vejjajiva and other key persons in the government resided. The government and the CRES finally announced an operation titled "Ask Back the Protesting Site", and on the 10th April government troops approached the Red Shirts' encampment at Phan Fa and fired live ammunition into the rally. The ensuing battle killed 27 people, including Hiroyuki Muramoto, a Japanese photographer for Reuters, as well as injuring at least 1,700 others including soldiers and policemen (PIC, 2012: 48-54).[191]

The dream of the people's revolution remains improbable but the movement has yet to die. Having no rights to have a state funeral at Sanam Luang, like the 17 soldiers and policemen of the war against the Boworadet Rebellion, the dead protestors received funeral rites at the Democracy Monument, the People's Party's emblem of democracy. The next section discusses the funeral ceremony of the Red Shirts who died in the violence of the 10th April at the Democracy Monument as a struggle to insert their sacrifice into the narrative of democracy.

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[191] The clashes on 10th April were part of the series of protests between 10th April and 19th May. This period, known as the April-May crackdown, ended with violent confrontations between protestors and government troops. It left at least 94 casualties and thousands injured. Vejjajiva set up the Truth for Reconciliation and Conciliation in Thailand (TRCT) to investigate the April-May crackdown and to promote reconciliation. TRCT operated in a fixed two-year period, from 17th July 2010 to 16th July 2012. See, *Truth for Reconciliation and Conciliation in Thailand* (2012) Final Report of Truth for Reconciliation and Conciliation in Thailand (TRCT) July 2010-July 2012, Bangkok: Truth for Reconciliation and Conciliation in Thailand. A civil society called "The People's Information Center: April-May 2010 (PIC), launched on 19th July 2010, has worked in parallel with TRCT and heavily criticised TCRC's report for failing to acquire information from all sides, particularly the military. PIC's report can be downloaded from http://www.pic2010.org/truth/, Accessed 8th December 2014. For the information about the April-May crackdown, this thesis relies mainly on PIC's report.

The Democracy Monument: The Shrine of Democracy and the Red Shirts' Commemoration

At 6pm on the 11th April 2010 at the Democracy Monument, one day after the clashes, the UDD prepared red coffins, tents and an altar for funeral rites for the dead protestors.[192] Whereas a picture of the Democracy Monument as a birthday cake in the Red Shirts' commemoration at the People's Party's Plaque in 2009 celebrated the (re)birth of the People's Party's democracy, the actual monument became a funeral site of the Red Shirts who died in a call for electoral politics, conceptualising their death as a sacrifice for democracy. Covered by red clothes and graffiti, "Return the power to the people" (Fig. 74), the monument became a performative agent of subsuming memory (Antze and Lambek, 1996; Sturken, 1997; Koureas, 2007), inserting the Red Shirts' struggle for electoral politics into the realm of national remembrance.

This section deals with the Democracy Monument as the focus of the rituals, rhetoric and ceremonies of bereavement. Two events will be discussed in relation to the performative role of the Democracy Monument: the funeral of the Red Shirts on the 11th April and the dead body performance on 1st August. The analysis of the Red Shirts' funeral will demonstrate how the Democracy Monument functioned as a site of mourning (Winter, 1995) where religious rituals provided consolation for the living after an encounter with state-sanctioned mass murder.[193] It investigates how the death rituals transformed this revolutionary heritage into a shrine of democracy, a site of passage (Hastrup, 1998)[194] that

[192] This section only discusses the role of the Democracy Monument in relation to the funeral procession of the dead protestors on the 11th April 2010 but the movement had organised other political activities at this site prior to the funeral rites. Silapin Thai Serichon Group (Thai liberal artist group) and the October Network organised an installation piece and art activities at the monument on the 28th March 2010. They covered the sculpture of *phan ratthathammanun* on top of the monument with a piece of red cloth. They also brought an 8x24-metre piece of white cloth on which the text "SCRAP CONSTITUTION '50" was written, and let the participants write and imprint their footprints to express their disagreement with the constitution sanctioned by the 2006 coup. That piece of cloth was tied around the monument on which the protestors also sprayed graffiti and wrote slogans. See http://www.artgazine.com/shoutouts/viewtopic.php?t=10139, Accessed 13th September 2011.

[193] In *Site of Memory, Site of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History*, Jay Winter analysed commemoration and mourning as a formation of collective solace during and after the First World War. See Winter, Jay (1995), *Site of Memory, Site of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Winter is an expert on a study of the remembrance of war in the twentieth century. See also, Winter, Jay and Sivan, Emmanuel (1999) *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and Winter, Jay and Prost, Antoine (2005) *The Great War in History: Debates and Controversies, 1914 to the Present*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[194] The anthropological literature on ritual performance, space and liminality is vast. See for example, Victor Turner (1974) *Drama, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*, New York: Ithaka; Victor Turner (1991 *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, Ithaka: Cornell University Press; Hastrup, Kristen (1998) 'Theatre as a Site of Passage: Some Reflections on the Magic of Acting' in Freeland-Hughes, Felicia (ed.) *Ritual, Performance, Media*, London and New York: Routledge, p. 29-45.

transmuted destruction into heroism, raising the status of the dead protestors to democratic martyrs. On the other hand, the dead body performance transformed the Democracy Monument into a theatrical space that staged a call for justice for the dead protestors and the movement's will to be remembered. By taking the Democracy Monument as the operational site, both events engage the Red Shirts with Thailand's democratic discourse. Central to the argument of this section is a discussion of the performative role of the Democracy Monument in inscribing the dead protestors in Thailand's historical records.

The Democracy Monument is different from the People's Party's Plaque and the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument since it does not commemorate any specific event but functions as the embodiment of ideology: constitutionalism/democracy. This character enables the monument to be the most powerful symbol of democracy in the history of modern Thai politics. Despite being created by the People's Party, this monument has always been in the Thai consciousness and reclaimed by many different political groups. From its origins in the People's Party era, the Democracy Monument, as signifier of ideology, has been used as a backdrop and symbolism of many political demonstrations including the October 14th Incident (1973), Black May (1992) and in many protests by the Red Shirts and Yellow Shirts since 2006. These demonstrations have altered the original meaning and role of the Democracy Monument in the national history (Reynolds, 2007),[195] adding layers of meaning and memory to the monument. Contrary to the notion of heritage as a "closed story", a fixed narrative (Samuel, 2012), the Democracy Monument was *lieu de mémoire*, an open-discourse that had the ability to accumulate and store many layers of memory, some vanished in the course of time, some still remain but are not necessarily homogeneous (Nora, 1999).

As such, the new identity of the Democracy Monument as a site of protest was constituted long before the post-2006 crisis since it had passed through various demonstrations and traumas. In fact, the Red Shirts' funeral at the monument was not the first time that this revolutionary heritage engaged with political death. Dead bodies can become political symbols (Verdery, 1999).[196] During the mass rally on Ratchadamnoen

[195] Craig J. Reynolds, an Australian historian of Southeast Asia, examined the use of the Democracy Monument as a site of protest from the 1970s to the 1990s. He argued that these protests inscribed additional narratives to the monument and thus destroyed its original role in Thai national history. See Reynolds, Craig J. (2000) *Icon of Identity as Site of Protest: Burma and Thailand Compared*, Taipei: Academia Sinica, Program of Southeast Asian Area Studies. See also Khumsupha, Malini (2005) *ibid*.

[196] Katherine Verdery investigated the politics around dead bodies during the 1990s in the former Soviet Bloc. By analysing the role of the dead bodies of revolutionary leaders, heroes, artists, and other luminaries in the postsocialist politics, she argued that corpse were not only corporeal elements but could serve as political

Avenue in the 14th October Incident in 1973, the dead body of a youth protestor was placed at the top of the monument to proclaim the cruelty of Marshall Thanom Kittikachorn's totalitarian government (Khumsupha, 2005). The performative power of the monument constituted such a death as a sacrifice for democracy. The reference to the politicisation of corpses during the October 14th Incident enabled the monument, which was not religious in character, to be the perfect site for both the funeral rites for the dead Red Shirts and the dead body performance.

The following part elaborates the funeral rites of the dead Red Shirts on 11th April. This event transformed the Democracy Monument into a temporal religious space where religious and political rituals combined — a shrine of democracy. It was evident that the traditional mode of commemoration had a significant role in the process of mourning and honouring the dead (Winter, 1995). At 6.45pm, Suporn Atthakorn, one of the Red Shirt leaders, and ten Buddhist monks led the funeral procession that consisted of three red coffins with corpses and seven empty red coffins for a circumambulation of the monument (Fig. 75). By 7pm, the ex-prime minister from PPP Somchai Wongsawat, then head of PT Yongyuth Wichaidit, and some Members of Parliament from PT, laid down a white funeral robe (*bangsukun*) for monks to perform religious services (Prachatai, 12th April 2010*)*. Whereas the actual presence of the martyrs was essential for commemoration (Mosse, 1990), there were only three corpses in this funeral because only they had been conclusively identified by that time. The empty coffins in the procession had the symbolic function of referring to the rest of the dead whose presence was in framed photographs held by their respective families (Fig. 76).

The Red Shirts' funeral rites at the Democracy Monument was distinct from the funeral rites of their ideological ancestors, the 17 soldiers and policemen of the Boworadet Rebellion at Sanam Luang in 1934. Whereas the cremation of the 17 fallen was a state ceremony organised by the government to glorify the dead and their victory, the Red Shirts' funeral ceremony, which was organised by a civil society, was a remembrance of horror and tragedy. The commemoration and funeral rites thus shaped the social remembrance of the incident (Connerton, 1989) as traumatic experience. At the same time, it had a psychological function as consolation as it turned grief into dignity (Mosse, 1990). It attempted to obtain justification for the sacrifice and offered reparation for the loss; another Red Shirt leader, Nattawut Saikua, promised that the Thaikhom Foundation, a non-profit foundation founded

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symbols. See Verdery, Katherine (1995) *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change*, New York: Columbia University Press.

by Shinawatra that supported education of underprivileged children, would support the children of those who died until they finished their bachelor's degrees.

The Red Shirts' funeral rites reflected an attempt to transform an irreparable loss into a tragic consequence of meaningful action: a sacrifice for democracy. The symbolic power of the Democracy Monument plays a key role in the sacralisation of the victims. Covered by red cloth, the image of *phan ratthathammanun* on the top of the monument, the revolutionary motif, accommodated an expression of mourning, emphasising that the dead protestors had sacrificed their lives for democracy. Like *phan ratthathammanun* on the top of the middle pillar in the crematorium of the 17 fallen, *phan ratthathammanun* at the Democracy Monument bestowed the victims of military rage in the red coffins below as democratic martyrs and emphasised the meaningfulness of the demonstration. By engaging with religious death ritual, the Democracy Monument became a liminal space (Gennep, 1960; Turner, 1991), functioning as a site of passage (Hastrup, 1998), a threshold that transformed the dead protestors into virtuous noblemen, deserving places in the sphere of martyrdom. This interrelationship between performativity of place and ritual performance was a "social drama" (Turner, 1974) that countered the royalist's perception of the Red Shirts as the fool and affirmed that these protestors died for democracy. The national flags that covered the top of the red coffins (Fig. 75) confirmed that trading life for democracy was a moral action: a sacrifice for the nation.

An enthusiasm for a commemoration right after the clashes was also motivated by a desire to imprint the Red Shirts' confrontation with the government troops into the Thai collective memory. The intervention of the Red Shirts' traumatic experience at the Democracy Monument on Ratchadamnoen Avenue demonstrated a "will to remember" (Nora, 1989). Organising the funeral ceremony here was a performance of memory, a practice of memorialisation operated by activists in a public place (Bosco, 2004) that demonstrated a geographic dimension to the politics of memory by inscribing the movement's stories on this particular landscape.[197] As part of the conflict between *phrai* — plebeian and *ammat* — aristocrat with a support of the middle class, the Red Shirts' funeral

[197] Many scholars address memorial landscape as a subject of contestation. They suggest that different types of conflict engage with the representation of memory in the landscape. For a discussion of the creation of landscape of memory by the less powerful or marginalised group to challenge institutionalized views of the past, see for example, Bosco, Fernando (2004) 'Human Rights Politics and Scale Performances of Memory: Conflicts among the Madres de Plaza de Mayo in Argentina' *Social and Cultural Geography* 5, no. 3, pp. 381–402; Alderman, Derek (2000) 'New Memorial Landscapes in the American South: An Introduction' *Professional Geographer*, 52, pp. 658-660; Arzaryahu, Maoz (1999) 'McDonald's or Golani Junction? A Case of Contest Places in Israel' *Professional Geographer*, 51, pp. 481-492 and Dwyer, Owen (2000) 'Interpreting the Civil Rights Movement: Place, Memory and Conflict' *Professional Geographer*, 52, pp. 660-671.

on Ratchadamnoen Avenue or the royal promenade suggested both a demand for widespread recognition and a challenge to the royalist hegemony.

At the funeral rites, the Red Shirt leaders announced that the Thai people and the world "will never forget them" (Prachatai, 12th April 2010). Binding with the monument through rituals, the dead protestors were repositioned, honoured and entered the realm of timelessness. The Red Shirts' funeral rites reflected a desire for not being relegated to historical oblivion, but living forever after in collective memory. However, Vejjajiva's government and the majority of the Bangkok middle classes organised various campaigns to "erase" the memory of the massacre.[198] Four days after the Red Shirts' funeral ceremony, Bangkok Governor Mom Rajawongse Sukhumbhand Paripatra led a team of workers and civic groups to clean and repaint the Democracy Monument (Fig. 77). The Department of Fine Arts was also asked to renovate the monument (Manager Online, 15th April 2010). Another campaign, the Cleaning Day on the 23rd May (Manager Online, 24th May 2010) encouraged Bangkokians to clean the streets where the April-May crackdown took place (Fig. 78). These massive cleaning efforts physically cleansed and symbolically "purified" Bangkok of the dirt and blood, presumably dirty blood of *phrai*, in the Bangkok landscape. It not only expressed a physical form of erasing memory but also implied a reclaimation of royalist democracy in a spatial dimension.

In response to the government's purification project, the Red Shirts demonstrated a will to be remembered and insisted on inserting the memory of the violence in April into the public consciousness. On the 30th April, Red Sunday, a political organisation led by Sombat Bunngamanong, started weekly commemorative activities held every Sunday to prevent the deaths of Red Shirt demonstrators from being forgotten, most notably with the slogan "people have been killed here."[199] These activities showed resistance to the Vejjajiva government as well as being a demand for justice for the dead, the injured and the missing. These Red Sunday activities encouraged people to wear red every Sunday thereafter and to

[198] Many Thai visual artists responded to the government's campaign concerning the April-May 2010 crackdown. For example, the Bangkok Art and Culture Centre (BACC), with the support of the Ministry of Culture, opened an exhibition entitled "Imagine Peace" on the 24th June 2010 under the Strong Thailand Operation Project. The exhibition featured more than 50 artists showing work on the theme of peace. The Ministry of Culture stated that the April-May crackdown had deeply divided Thai society and therefore it was desirable and necessary to initiate healing for Thai citizens as well as reviving the good image of the country. See http://www.m-culture.go.th/detail_page.php?sub_id=1754, Accessed 30th November 2011.

[199] See more in http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/investigation/186643/standing-up-against-the-flow, Accessed 30th November 2011.

demonstrate opposition to the government. The group also performed dead body performances at the Democracy Monument.[200]

On Sunday 1st August, Red Sunday and other groups organised the first Art for Peace Project under the theme "The Dead, the Building and the Emergency Decree" at the 14th October Incident Memorial at Khok Wua intersection near the Democracy Monument. The event included photography and a poetry auction to raise funds for the People's Information Center: April-May 2010 (PIC), a civil society consisting of academics, lawyers and activists focusing on fact-finding about the government crackdown on the Red Shirt demonstrators. The fund was to support volunteer lawyers and to help those who had been arrested under the Emergency Decree (Prachatai, 2nd August 2010). In the evening, Red Sunday and about 500 participants moved to the Democracy Monument where they tied a piece of red cloth to the base of the monument and turned it into a theatrical space. After singing the national anthem at 6pm, they lay on the ground and screamed, mimicking those who had been shot by snipers (Fig. 79). Some of them shouted, "People have been killed here" (Prachatai, 1st August 2010).

Whereas the cleaning of the Democracy Monument in May was a rupture of memory, the dead body performance, with some performers wearing red clothes or make-up to mimic ghosts, reconstructed the massacre of the Red Shirts and re-connected the Democracy Monument with the April-May crackdown. It also staged an act of ritual that enabled the dead to return to the world of the living. Again, the Democracy Monument re-appeared as a liminal space (Gennep, 1960; Turner, 1991) and a site of passage *(*Hastrup, 1998), a threshold between the world of the living and the dead.

However, it was different from the funeral on the 11th April since it was not an entrance to the realm of timelessness but an exit for the spirits to come and call for fairness, justice and accountability from the government. By the act of re-telling and re-staging the recent violent past, the performers became an intermediary—a shaman—who entered a trance state during a performance and brought a message from the afterworld. Acting as ghost transformed the living—the performers—into a shaman. The message "people have

[200] The first dead body performance took place on the 11th July at Ratchaprasong, another area where Red Shirts and volunteer nurses had been shot dead. A group of people wore red clothes with some, wearing make-up to look like ghosts, and lay down in the street whereupon garlands of flowers were placed on their bodies to mourn over them. The message "people have died here" appeared on signs and was verbally repeated by shouting as if to tell the government, and the Bangkok middle classes who had supported it, to realise that their fellow citizens had been killed. Red strips of cloth were tied to street signs while white stickers were stuck around the site to enable people to write down their thoughts including condemnation of the government. See the full report in *Prachatai*, http://www. prachatai.com/journal/2010/07/30289, Accessed 9th August 2015.

been killed here" and the politicisation of death thus performed both an act of memorialisation and a call for accountability. The performativity of place and performance re-affirmed the status of the dead protestors as democratic martyrs and continued to apply pressure on the government to take responsibility. Not as easy as cleaning actual blood and dirt on the ground, the death of the Red Shirts was an unremovable stain imprinted on the national memory.

In conclusion, the Red Shirts' commemorations at the Democracy Monument were different from other activities at the Peoples Party's Plaque and the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument because they bore no relation to the revolutionary past. Both the funeral on the 11th April and the dead body performance on 1st August were entirely concerned with the current situation, the traumatic experiences of the Red Shirt movement. Yet, organising these collective rituals at all this heritage site affirmed the ascendant-descendant relationship between the revolutionary and the movement. The monument was a mediator between the past and the present (Azaryahu, 1993), the revolutionary spirit thus absorbed the individuals, dead or alive, merging with their ideological ancestors who shared the same ideology and died before them. For the Red Shirts, the People's Party unfinished project may remain unfinished yet the rivalry between the revolution and the counter-revolution has not ended. From 1932 to 2010, the People's Party's heritage has always been central to the debates on the true begetters of Thai democracy and owners of sovereign power.

Conclusion

At 5am on the 24th June 2012, "The People's Party the Second" (Khana ratsadon thi song), a group consisting of students from both Thammasart University and Chulalongkorn University, gathered together with other groups at the People's Party's Plaque to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the 1932 Revolution. Dressing up as the People's Party key members, the People's Party the Second staged a commemorative play about the revolution (Fig. 80). They read the People's Party's Six Principles and proposed the Six New Principles corresponding with the current situation. The Six New Principles called on the military to halt all political intervention, to find those responsible for the alleged murder of Red Shirt demonstrators and supporters and other innocent people in the April-May clashes with the military in 2010, to improve the lives of labourers and the lower classes throughout the country, to stop the use of lèse majesté (Article 112), to release all political prisoners, and to provide academic freedom and education to all Thai citizens (Prachatai, 24th June 2012). Panithan (Tai) Pruksakasemsuk, a member of the People's Party the Second and son of the imprisoned Red Shirt activist and editor Somyot Pruksakasesuk, declared that these activities recalled the memory of the 1932 Revolution and reflected the current situation which had undermined the country's progress towards democracy.

The commemorative space around the People's Party's Plaque provided an arena in which the People's Party the Second established a firm historical background with the revolutionaries and the 1932 Revolution. Calling themselves "the People's Party the Second" and announcing the Six New Principles at the People's Party's Plaque indicated an interrelationship between the resurrection of past events and the historicisation of self as the second generation of the revolutionaries. However, the performance did not only commemorate the People's Party's revolution but also integrated the current needs. As it re-vitalised the success of the 1932 Revolution that changed the Thai political system from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy, this commemorative performance brought back undesirable memories for royalists. Furthermore, a call for the abolition of lèse majesté and the release of all political prisoners advanced Liberty, one of the People's Six Principles, and explicitly placed the monarchy in the opposite corner. This new aspect of Liberty combined with the anti-royalist implications of this revolutionary icon demonstrated a challenge towards royalism. More obvious than ever before, the People's Party the Second's performance addressed the monarchy as a hindrance to the development of democracy.

In return, the People's Party's Plaque, the smallest revolutionary memorial on the grounds of the Royal Plaza, thus became the most powerful of all anti-royalist symbols, it became a thorn in the royalist flesh and, as a consequence, the state placed the immediate area around the commemorative plaque under surveillance. About 30 policemen from Dusit Police Station watched over the event, justifying their presence in that it was for security reasons and to prevent the commemoration from the "third party" (Matichon, 24th June 2012).

Since division between the pro-democracy movement and the royalists has deepened every year, and various massacres of the Red Shirts have yet to be clarified, the commemoration of the People's Party's past merged with the current demand for justice and state surveillance of the commemoration of the 1932 Revolution became more intense. Disguising the overt surveillance was no longer necessary. Two years later at the commemoration events of the 24th June 2014, one month after the latest military coup, state officials surrounded the People's Party's Plaque with black/yellow warning tape and barricades (Fig. 81) and required participants to register before entering the protected site (Prachatai, 24th June 2014). Clearly, such protection was neither for the security of the revolutionary heritage nor for the participants. Rather, it was an expression of power by the military state on this commemorative landscape. The registration system implied a more rigid control and surveillance.

On the 23rd June, Pol. Gen. Somyot Poompanmuang, Commissioner General of the Royal Thai Police, warned that any sign of protest against the coup was illegal (Prachatai, 23rd June 2014). The National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO), the junta ruling the country following the coup, announced martial law to prosecute opponents, ban political activities and censor all media. As such, martial law separated the pro-democracy movement from the People's Party, cutting the ancestral bonds between them. The commemoration of the 24th June 2014 was conducted under the theme of "Dream Afloat: Sending Wishes to the People's Party". It consisted of a cleaning of the People's Party's Plaque, the laying of flowers, poetry readings, writing messages to the People's Party on a piece of paper and the releasing of balloons. The total absence of anti-coup protests in the commemoration of the 1932 Revolution signified a total collapse of Thai democracy.

However, since the country has been under the military junta and silence has become the loudest sound, nostalgia has re-appeared as a symbol of hope for the future. As the longing for the People's Party was the only expression permitted by the junta, it was used as a signifier of a dream for democracy. The participants wrote their messages to the People's

Party on the small pieces of paper and placed them inside balloons but there were not permitted to release them at the People's Party's Plaque. The participants released their wishes into the sky at the Democracy Monument on the other side of Ratchadamnoen Avenue (Fig. 82).[201]

It is impossible to write history without facing up to the politics that lay behind the historiography (Reynolds, 2000). Like the whole cultural legacy of the People's Party, the plaque was a mottled spot, an unremovable stain on the royal space and "wrong" in the royalist art history. Through an examination of the complex relationship between Thai politics, class struggle, history, practice of memory and aesthetic conventions, the thesis *Revolution versus Counter-Revolution: The People's Party and the Royalist(s) in Visual Dialogue* has exhumed the People's Party's visual culture from the grave of historical oblivion and provided a counter-narrative to the royalist art history. The theory of performativity employed in this thesis has unravelled the production of meaning of the Peoples Party's visual culture and has argued that the anti-royalist stance expressed in the revolutionary art, architecture and memorials was fundamental to the suppression of the People's Party's visual culture in Thai art history. Hence, the People's Party's artistic and memorial practices were paradoxically "part" of Thai art history: the mottled part that is forced into exile.

Yet, the status of "wrong" for the royalists enabled it to be "right" for the pro-democracy movement. The Thai historian Thongchai Winichakul once remarked, "memory is not to tell the truth but who you are",[202] memory is fluid by nature and opens itself to continuous interpretation, reformation and legitimisation. For the pro-democracy movement, the People's Party were the "forerunners", not the "early ripe, early rotten" as in the royalist accusations. This attempt to re-constitute a collective memory illustrated the point that Svetlana Boym (2001) had made, that nostalgia happened in times of historical upheaval. No longer an alien of Thai society, as Kukrit Pramoj had condemned it to be, the People's Party's visual culture has been revived and has interwoven itself into the fabric of Thai political history.

Being both the target and performative agent in the revolution and the counter-revolution efforts, this thesis has argued that the dynamism of the People's Party's art and

[201] Amnuay Nimano, Deputy Commander of the Metropolitan Police did not allow the participants to release the balloons at the People's Party's Plaque. He stated that the balloons might float over the royal area of the nearby Dusit Palace. The participants thus moved to the Democracy Monument.

[202] Thongchai Winichakul, *Silence of the Wolf: The Perpetrators of the 1976 Massacre in Bangkok, 30 Years Afterwards*, Public Lecture at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, England, 3rd November 2011.

architecture is deeply embedded within the quest for the true begetter of Thai democracy and the possession of sovereign power. By concentrating on the performativity of commemorative practices, this thesis has demonstrated the People's Party's art, architecture and monuments as *lieux de mémoire*, sites of memory that have always been the loci of a political rivalry between royalism and constitutionalism/democracy. They were both sites of contested memories and political contestation and, as such, the absence and re-presence of the Peoples' Party's cultural legacy was intrinsic to the on-going war to define, justify and possess the desired political ideology among the conflicting groups in Thailand.

Chapter one explored the use of the Anantasamakhom Throne Hall and its surroundings, such as the Royal Plaza and King Chulalongkorn's Equestrian Statue, as sites for the war between the two ideologies of royalism and constitutionalism. The political significance of the area as a symbol of the absolutist regime provided a perfect ground for the ideological competition. The reading of the Announcement of the People's Party No. 1 at the Royal Plaza on the 24th June 1932, the affixation of the commemorative plaque on the 24th June 1936 and the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony on the 10th December 1932 were examples of the People's Party's acts that challenged the old institutions and its iconic places. The performative aspect in the photographs of King Prajadhipok's granting of the first Constitution was examined as an act of constituting and authorising the new political ideology, namely Constitutionalism. The presence and circulation of these images are considered to be part of the political propaganda conducted by the People's Party.

Chapter two investigated the image of *phan ratthathammanun*, a symbol of constitutionalism, in the visual culture associated with the funeral rites and commemorative artefacts initiated by the People's Party. The image of *phan ratthathammanun* first appeared in an anti-royalist context after the People's Party had overcome the Boworadet Rebellion in 1933. Its presence in the Grand Cremation at Sanam Luang and the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument marked the separation of constitutionalism from royalism. It detached itself from Prajadhipok's act of constitution on the 10th December 1932 and became a stand-alone symbol of the supreme ideology. This chapter discussed the image of *phan ratthathammanun* in relation to death rituals and commemoration as a visual sign of the supreme ideology that was worth dying for.

Chapter three focused on the body politics manifested in sculptural practices during the People's Party's regime. It analysed the adoption of a Western art discourse as the muscular bodies of Westerners provided a catalyst for the aspired change in Thai society. Together with other forms of promoting the new body in the official policies, announcements

and media advertisements, the muscularised body of the sculptures in the Constitutional Fair served as a critique of the monarchy as well as a new model of the ideal Thai body.

Chapter four analysed the reincarnation of the image of Prajadhipok in the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony as part of the royalist efforts in reconstructing the monarchy as an embodiment of democracy and a symbol of anti-communism. It explored the recontextualisation of the King's image (1932) and his abdication letter (1935) in a post-1947 context. The chapter examined the transformation of King Prajadhipok from being the last absolutist king to being the first democratic ruler in relation to the projection of the People's Party as a group of villains in the history of Thai politics. The discourse of "early ripped, early rotted" that has attached to and stigmatised the 1932 Revolution was also constructed during this period.

Chapter five explained the revivification of the People's Party's memory by the Red Shirt movement in the current political conflict. By focusing on commemorations, the chapter underlined the importance of the People's Party's visual culture in the post-2006 ideological contestation. It examined the role and function of three memorials built in the People's Party's regime, the People's Party's Plaque, the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument and the Democracy Monument, as both sites of protest and agents of subsuming memory.

Whereas this thesis has limited itself to the timeframe between 1932 and 2010, the pro-democracy movement has continued to appropriate the People's Party's cultural heritage as this sovereign dispute has intensified due to the rapid decline of the monarchy and the rise of the lower classes. The clouded future of the monarchy lies behind the current political crisis since King Bhumibol's poor health (age 87) signals the approach of the end of his reign, and his son and heir, the Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn is not as popular as his father. The term "royalist democracy" may be an oxymoron but it seems to be the only way to secure royal legitimacy. In this circumstance, the rivalry between royalism and constitutionalism/democracy as the origin of Thai democracy is crucial and the state surveillance of the commemoration of the People's Party has become more intense. The appropriation of the revolutionary cultural heritage stepped further away from engaging with post-2006 politics to the crisis enveloping the monarchy towards the end of the King's reign and, as such, further research is required in analysing the changing role of the People's Party's visual culture.

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Figure 1 The Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall, Bangkok

Source: Author

Figure 2 King Chulalongkorn Equestrian at the Royal Plaza, Bangkok

Source: Author

Figure 3 The Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall and Chulalongkorn Equestrian at the Royal Plaza, Bangkok

Source: Author

Figure 4 The People's Party Plaque, Bangkok

Source: Author

Figure 5 The People's Party Plaque on the ground of the Royal Plaza, Bangkok

Source: Author

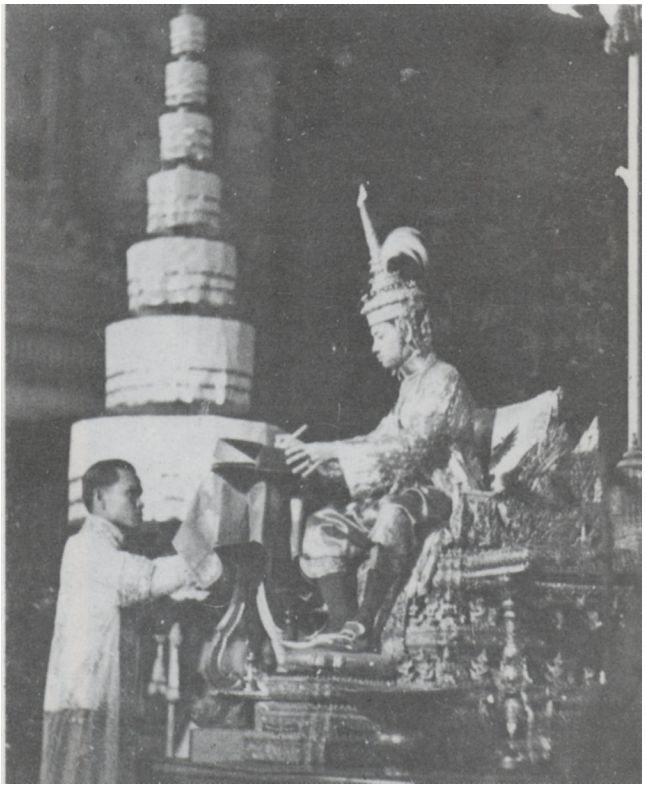


Figure 6 (Left)

Phraya Manopakorn Nititada (Kon Hutasingha) presented the constitution to King Prajadhipok on 10th December 1932 at the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall, Bangkok

Source: The National Archives, Thailand

Figure 7 (Right)

King Prajadhipok signed the constitution on 10th December 1932 at the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall, Bangkok

Source: Kasetsiri, Charnvit (2008) *A Political History of Thailand-Siam 1932-1957*, Fifth Edition, Bangkok: The Foundation for the Promotion of Social Sciences and Humanities Textbooks Project, p. 112

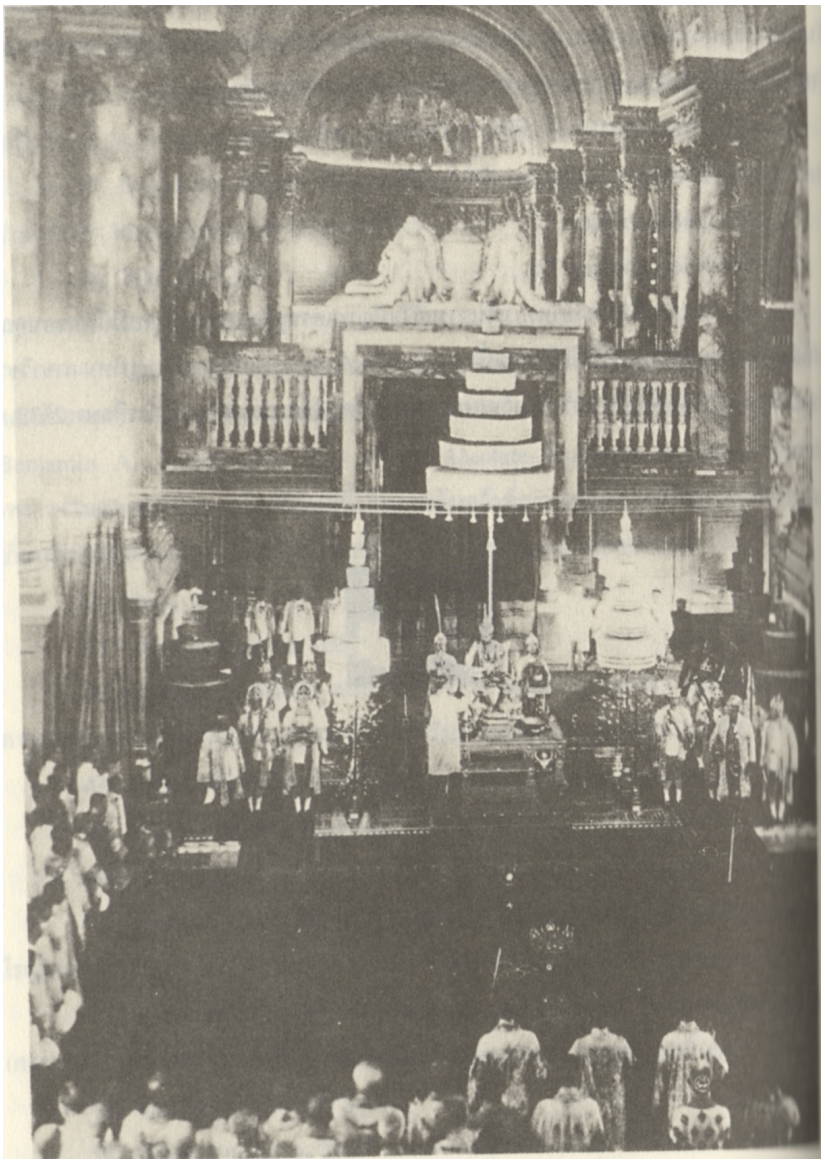


Figure 8 Panoramic view of the Royal Constitution Granting Ceremony, 10th December 1932, The Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall, Bangkok

Source: Kasetsiri, Charnvit (2008) *A Political History of Thailand-Siam 1932-1957*, Fifth Edition, Bangkok: The Foundation for the Promotion of Social Sciences and Humanities Textbooks Project, p. 120

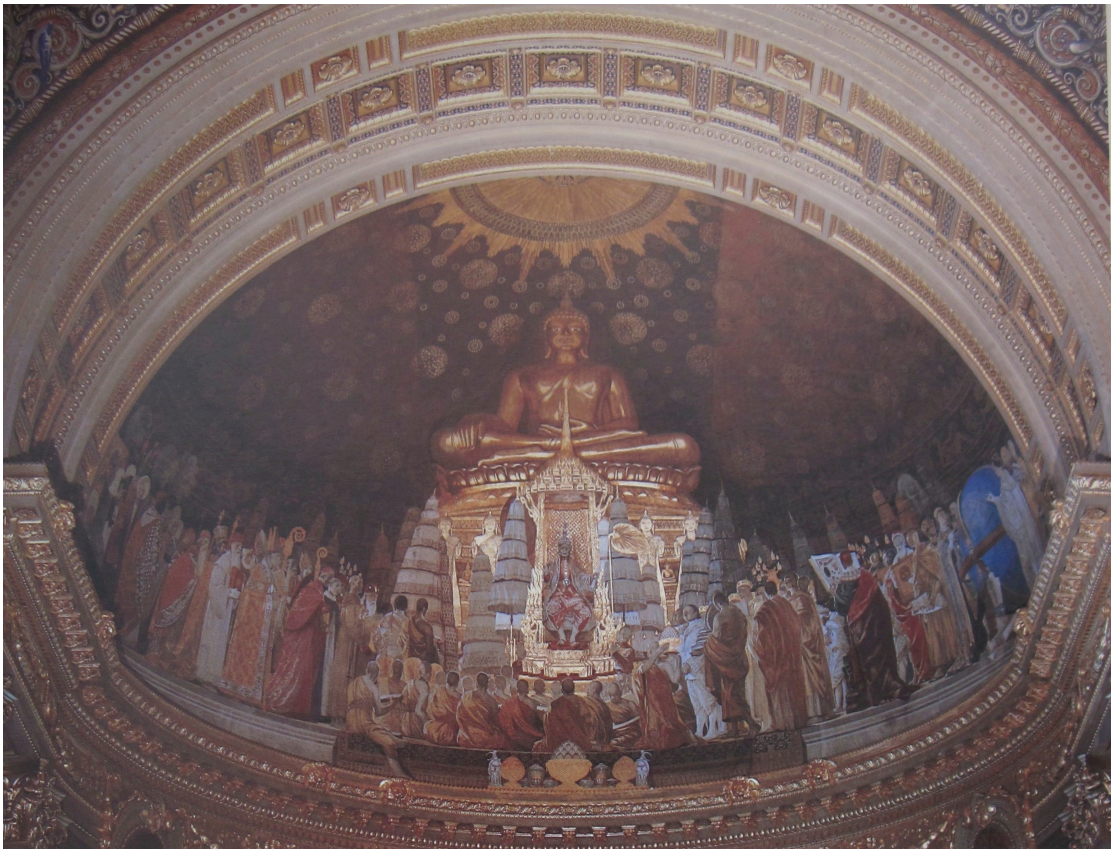
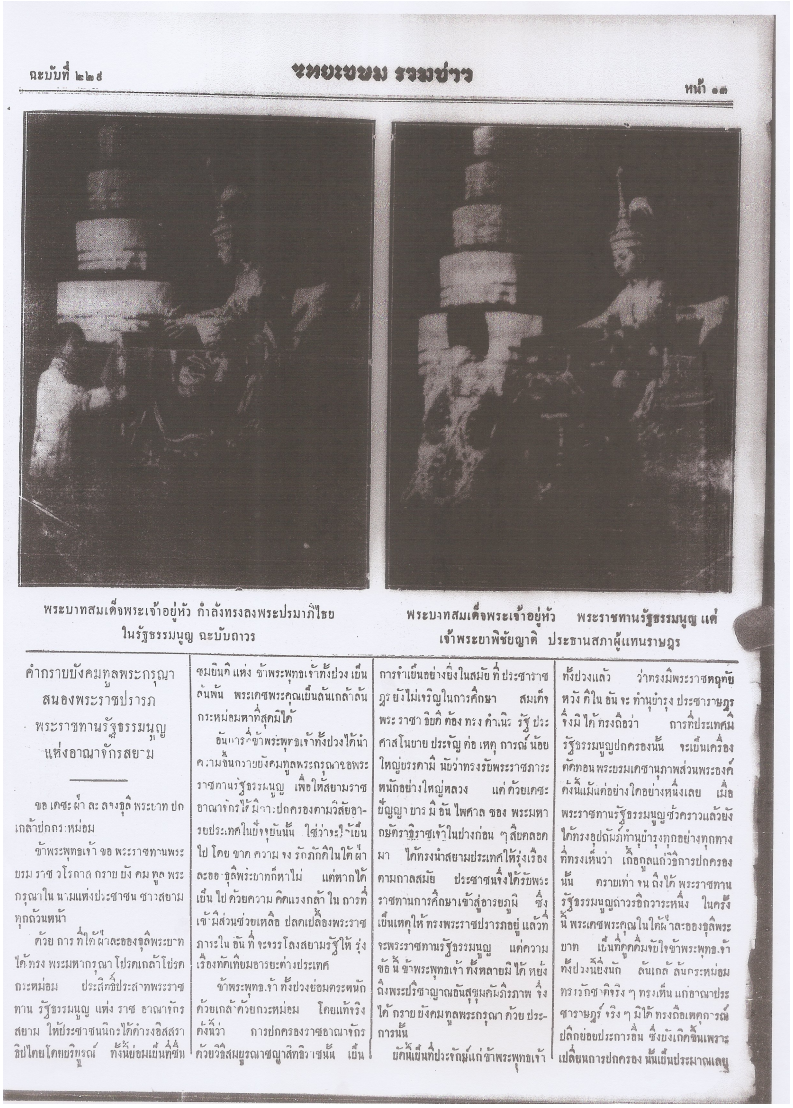


Figure 9 Galileo Chini*, King Mongkut as a Promoter of Religions*, fresco secco, c. 1912-1913, The Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall, Bangkok

Source: Poshyananda, Apinan (1992) *Western-style Painting and Sculpture in the Thai Royal Court, Vol. 2*, Published in Gratitude to the Gracious Compassion of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit and in Celebration of Her Majesty's Sixtieth Birthday Anniversary on 12 August 1992, Bangkok: Bureau of the Royal Household, p. 176

Figure 10 The Four Royal Seals (from left to right and below): the Great Royal Seal of Maha Ongkan, the Great Royal Seal of Airaphot, the Great Royal Seal of Hong Phiman and the Great Royal Seal of Phra Khrut Phah

Source: Author



ฉบับที่ ๒๒๙ ไทยเขษม รวมข่าว หน้า ๑๓

พระบาทสมเด็จพระเจ้าอยู่หัว กำลังทรงลงพระปรมาภิไธย ในรัฐธรรมนูญ ฉบับถาวร

พระบาทสมเด็จพระเจ้าอยู่หัว พระราชทานรัฐธรรมนูญ แด่ เจ้าพระยาพิชัยญาติ ประธานสภาผู้แทนราษฎร

คำกราบบังคมทูลพระกรุณา สนองพระราชปรารภ พระราชทานรัฐธรรมนูญ แห่งอาณาจักรสยาม

ขอเดชะฝ่าละอองธุลีพระบาท ปกเกล้าปกกระหม่อม

ข้าพระพุทธเจ้า ขอพระราชทานพระบรมราชวโรกาส กราบบังคมทูลพระกรุณาในนามแห่งประชาชนชาวสยามทุกถ้วนหน้า

ด้วยการที่ได้ฝ่าละอองธุลีพระบาทได้ทรงพระมหากรุณาโปรดเกล้าโปรดกระหม่อม ประกาศใช้ประกาศพระราชทานรัฐธรรมนูญ แห่งราชอาณาจักรสยาม ให้ประชาชนมีกระได้ดำรงชีวิตสืบราชสันติสุขโดยทั่วกัน ข้าพระพุทธเจ้าทั้งปวงย่อมมีความชื่นชมยินดี แห่งข้าพระพุทธเจ้าทั้งปวงเป็นล้นพ้น พระเดชพระคุณเป็นล้นเกล้าล้นกระหม่อมหาที่สุดมิได้

อันการที่ข้าพระพุทธเจ้าทั้งปวงได้นำความชื่นชมยินดีมาทูลพระกรุณาขอพระราชทานรัฐธรรมนูญ เพื่อให้สยามราชอาณาจักรได้มีการปกครองตามวิสัยอารยประเทศในบัดนี้นั้น ใช่ว่าจะได้เป็นไปโดยฉาก ความจงรักภักดีในใต้ฝ่าละอองธุลีพระบาทก็หาไม่ แต่หากได้เป็นไปด้วยความคิดแรงกล้า ในการที่เข้ามีส่วนช่วยเหลือ ปกเกล้าปกกระหม่อมพระราชภาระในอันที่ทรงรับโลงสยามรัฐให้รุ่งเรืองทัดเทียมอารยะต่างประเทศ

ข้าพระพุทธเจ้าทั้งปวงย่อมตระหนักด้วยเกล้าด้วยกระหม่อม โดยแท้จริงดังนี้ว่า การปกครองราชอาณาจักรด้วยวิธีสมบูรณาญาสิทธิราชนั้น เป็นการดำเนินอย่างยิ่งในสมัยที่ประชาราษฎรยังไม่เจริญในการศึกษา สมเด็จพระราชาธิบดีทรงดำเนินรัฐประศาสโนบาย ประกอบด้วยเหตุการณ์น้อยใหญ่มากมาย นับว่าทรงรับพระราชภาระหนักอย่างใหญ่หลวง แต่ด้วยเดชะบุญญาบารมีอันไพศาลของพระมหากษัตริย์ราชเจ้าในปางก่อน ๆ สืบตลอดมา ได้ทรงนำสยามประเทศให้รุ่งเรืองตามกาลสมัย ประชาชนจึงได้รับพระราชทานการศึกษาเข้าสู่อารยภูมิ ซึ่งเป็นเหตุให้ทรงพระราชปรารภอยู่ แล้วที่จะพระราชทานรัฐธรรมนูญ แต่ความขัดข้องนี้ ข้าพระพุทธเจ้าทั้งหลายมิได้เหยียดหยามพระบรมราชวินิจฉัยว่าจะไม่ดีไม่งาม ซึ่งจะได้ทรงประกาศใช้ด้วยประการนั้น

บัดนี้เป็นที่ประจักษ์แก่ข้าพระพุทธเจ้าทั้งปวงแล้ว ว่าทรงมีพระราชหฤทัยหวังดีในอันจะทำนุบำรุงประชาราษฎรยิ่งมิได้ทรงถือว่าการที่ประเทศมีรัฐธรรมนูญปกครองนั้น จะเป็นเครื่องตัดทอนพระบรมเดชานุภาพส่วนพระองค์ดังนี้แม้แต่อย่างใดอย่างหนึ่งเลย เมื่อพระราชทานรัฐธรรมนูญชั่วคราวแล้วยังได้ทรงอุตส่าห์ภิกษาบำรุงทุกอย่างทุกทางที่ทรงเห็นว่า เมื่อถึงแก่วิธีการปกครองนั้น ตราบเท่าจนถึงได้พระราชทานรัฐธรรมนูญถาวรอีกวาระหนึ่ง ในครั้งนี้ พระเดชพระคุณในใต้ฝ่าละอองธุลีพระบาท เป็นที่ตั้งครอบใจข้าพระพุทธเจ้าทั้งปวงนี้ยิ่งนัก ล้นเกล้าล้นกระหม่อม ทรงกิจการต่าง ๆ ทรงเห็นแก่อาณาประชาราษฎร์ ยิ่ง ๆ มิได้ทรงถือเหตุการณ์ปลีกย่อยประการอื่น ซึ่งมักเกิดขึ้นเพราะเปลี่ยนการปกครองนั้นเป็นประมาณเลย

Figure 11 *Thai Kasem*, Vol. 229, 17th December 1932: 13

Source: The National Archives, Thailand

ฉะบับที่ ๒๒๙ ชหยะชยม รวมข่าว หน้า ๕

พระบาทสมเด็จพระเจ้าอยู่หัว เสด็จออกสีหบัญชร ทักษิณทิศ ณ พระที่นั่งอนันตสมาคม เพื่อให้ประชาชนเฝ้าทูลละอองธุลีพระบาท เมื่อวันที่ ๑๐ ธันวาคม พ.ศ. ๒๔๗๕

พระราชบัญญัติ

ยกเลิกพระราชบัญญัติรัฐมนตรี

ประชาธิปก ป.ร.

พระบาท สมเด็จ พระ ปรมินทร มหา ประชาธิปก พระปกเกล้าเจ้าอยู่หัว มีพระ ยรม ราชโองการโปรดเกล้า ๆ ให้ประกาศว่า

โดยที่ สภาผู้แทนราษฎร ฉวาย คำชี้กษาว่า สมควรยกเลิกรัฐมนตรีสภา

จึงทรง พระกรุณาโปรดเกล้า ๆ ให้ตราพระราชบัญญัตินี้ขึ้นไว้ด้วยคำแนะนำยินยอม ของสภาผู้แทนราษฎร โดยยุทมาตราต่อไปนี้

มาตรา ๑ พระราชบัญญัตินี้ให้เรียกว่า "พระราชบัญญัติยกเลิกพระราชบัญญัติรัฐมนตรี"

มาตรา ๒ ให้ใช้พระราชบัญญัตินี้ตั้งแต่ วันประกาศ ใน ราชกิจจานุเบกษาเป็นต้นไป

มาตรา ๓ ให้ยกเลิก พระราชบัญญัติ รัฐมนตรี รัตนโกสินทร ศก ๑๓ และบรรดาพระราชกำหนดกฎหมายกฎข้อบังคับ และประกาศต่าง ๆ อันว่าด้วย รัฐมนตรี ตามพระราชบัญญัตินี้

ประกาศ มา ณ วันที่ ๗ ธันวาคม พุทธศักราช ๒๔๗๕ เป็นปีที่ ๔ ในรัชชกาลปัจจุบัน

ผู้รับพระบรมราชโองการ
พระยมโนปกรณนิติธาดา
ประธานคณะกรรมการราษฎร

คำกราบบังคมทูล ผู้เริ่มก่อการ

(ต่อจากหน้า ๓)

พระราชทานอภัยโทษแก่พวกข้าพระพุทธเจ้า โดยพระราชทานกำหนดนิรโทษกรรมนี้ด้วย พระมหากรุณาธิคุณนี้ข้าพระพุทธเจ้าทั้งหลาย ขอน้อมเกล้าน้อมกระหม่อม อยู่แก่ ใหพวก ข้าพระพุทธเจ้าแล้ว

การที่พวกข้าพระพุทธเจ้าได้ประกาศถวายข้อความใน วันเปลี่ยนแปลง ครั้งนั้น ถ้อยคำอันรุนแรง กระทบกระเทือนถึงให้

Figure 12 *Thai Kasem*, Vol. 229, 17th December 1932: 5

Source: The National Archives, Thailand

Figure 13 The Safeguarding the Constitution Medal

The medal's obverse is adorned with the image of *phan ratthathammanun* surrounded by a *chaiyapruek* and rays (Left). The reverse bears the image of Phra Syama Devadhiraj (Right)

Source: www.weloveshoping.com

Figure 14 The Crematorium at the Grand Cremation, 18th February 1934, Sanam Luang, Bangkok

Source: The Original Press Co., Ltd.

Figure 15 The Safeguarding the Constitution Monument, Lak Si, Bangkok

Source: The National Archives, Thailand

Figure 16 The Crematorium of King Mongkut (King Rama IV), c. 1868,
Sanam Luang, Bangkok

Source: Prakitnonthakan, Chatri (2009) *Silapa-sathapattayakam Khana ratsadon sanyalak tang kan mueang nai choeng udom kan* [The People's Party's art and architecture: Symbols of political ideology, Bangkok: Matichon, p. 75

Figure 17 Funeral procession from Rachathiwat Temple to Sanam Luang, Bangkok, 17th February 1934

Source: The Original Press Co., Ltd.

Figure 18 Funeral procession from Rachathiwat Temple to Sanam Luang, Bangkok, 17th February 1934

Source: The Original Press Co., Ltd.

Figure 19 Sala Chaloem Krung, Bangkok

Source: Prakitnonthakan, Chatri (2009) *Silapa-sathapattayakam Khana ratsadon sanyalak tang kan mueang nai choeng udom kan* [The People's Party's art and architecture: Symbols of political ideology], Bangkok: Matichon, p. 25

Figure 20 The Court of Appeal Building in the Ministry of Justice building complex, Bangkok

Source: Prakitnonthakan, Chatri (2009) *Silapa-sathapattayakam Khana ratsadon sanyalak tang kan mueang nai choeng udom kan* [The People's Party's art and architecture: Symbols of political ideology], Bangkok: Matichon, p. 195

Figure 21 The Grand Postal Building, Bangkok

Source: Prakitnonthakan, Chatri (2009) *Silapa-sathapattayakam Khana ratsadon sanyalak tang kan mueang nai choeng udom kan* [The People's Party's art and architecture: Symbols of political ideology], Bangkok: Matichon, p. 218

Figure 22 Sala Chaloemthai, Bangkok

Source: Prakitnonthakan, Chatri (2005) *Khana ratsadon chalong ratthathammanun: prawatsat kan mueang lung 2475 phan sathapattayakam amnat* [Khana ratsadon celebrating the constitution: History and power of Thai politics after 1932 in architecture], Bangkok: Matichon, p. 96

Figure 23 Commercial buildings on Ratchadamnoen Avenue, Bangkok
Source: Prakitnonthakan, Chatri (2005) *Khana ratsadon chalong ratthathammanun: prawatsat kan mueang lung 2475 phan sathapattayakam amnat* [Khana ratsadon celebrating the constitution: History and power of Thai politics after 1932 in architecture], Bangkok: Matichon, p. 94

Figure 24 Ratchanatda Temple and the Loha Prasada (The Metal Castle), Bangkok

Source: Author

Figure 25 Plan of the new Supreme Court Building

Source: www.muangboranjournal.com

Figure 26 Rattanakosin Exhibition Hall, Bangkok

Source: www.nitasrattanakosin.com

Figure 27 The Crematorium at the Grand Cremation, in the middle stood a pillar topped with a sculpture of *phan ratthathammanun*, 18th February 1934, Sanam Luang, Bangkok
Source: The Original Press Co., Ltd.

Figure 28 Ashes of the 17 fallen in the seventeen brass cartridges

Source: The Original Press Co., Ltd.

Figure 29 The Siamanussati poem on the east wall of the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument

Source: Author

Figure 30 The Veteran Monument of World War I, 1919, at the northern corner of Sanam Luang, Bangkok

Source: Author

Figure 31 Stupa containing the ashes of the People's Party members and their wives, Phra Si Mahathat Temple or Wat Prachathippatai (Democracy Temple), Bangkok

Source: Author

Figure 32 The Safeguarding the Constitution Monument, Bangkok

Source: Author

Figure 33 Inscription of the names of the 17 soldiers and policemen and the symbol of the Ministry of Defense on the west wall of the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument

Source: Author

Figure 34 Relief of a farmer family on the south wall of the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument

Source: Author

Figure 35 Front cover of the souvenir book *Anusaowari sipjet thahan lae tamruat* [Monument of the Seventeen Soldiers and Policemen] showing the picture of the monument
Source: Author

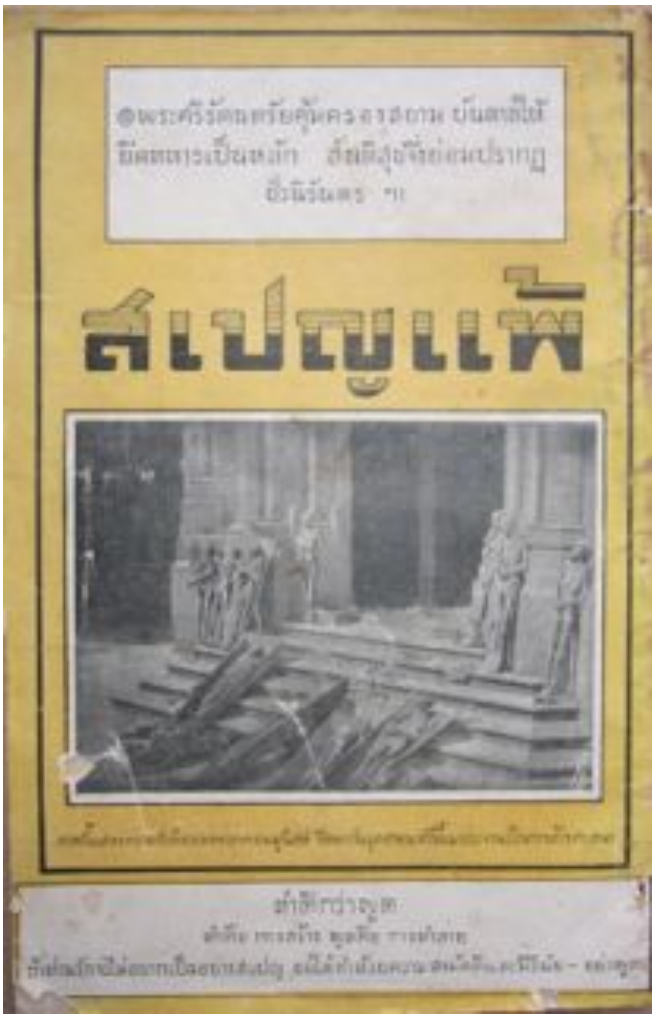


Figure 36 Back cover of the souvenir book *Anusaowari sipjet thahan lae tamruat* [Monument of the Seventeen Soldiers and Policemen] showing the pictures of the unearthed nuns' corpses in Spain

Source: Author

Figure 37 Church destroyed by fire in Spain in the souvenir book *Anusaowari sipjet thahan lae tamruat* [Monument of the Seventeen Soldiers and Policemen]

Caption: This picture demonstrates the ruin of the church that the communists had burnt down

Source: Directorate of Operations (1936) *Anusaowari sipjet thahan lae tamruat* [Monument of the Seventeen Soldiers and Policemen], Bangkok: The Royal Thai Survey Department Press, no pagination

Figure 38 Group of Spanish communists shooting the statue of Christ in the souvenir book *Anusaowari sipjet thahan lae tamruat* [Monument of the Seventeen Soldiers and Policemen]
Caption: This picture shows the evil of the communist; they insulted even the statue of Christ of which their ancestor had worshipped for thousand years.
Source: Directorate of Operations (1936) *Anusaowari sipjet thahan lae tamruat* [Monument of the Seventeen Soldiers and Policemen], Bangkok: The Royal Thai Survey Department Press, no pagination

Figure 39 The Spanish villagers and soldiers in the souvenir book *Anusaowari sipjet thahan lae tamruat* [Monument of the Seventeen Soldiers and Policemen]

Caption: The villagers were calling for peace from the revolutionary as the communist had killed hundred people of the village before they left.

Source: Directorate of Operations (1936) *Anusaowari sipjet thahan lae tamruat* [Monument of the Seventeen Soldiers and Policemen], Bangkok: The Royal Thai Survey Department Press, no pagination

Figure 40 Symbol of Buddhist *dhammachakka* on the north wall of the Safeguarding the Constitution Monument

Source: Author

Figure 41 Campaign poster "Eat More Dishes, Eat Less Rice to Grow Strongly"
Source: The Public Relations Department (1940) *Thai nai patjuban* [Thailand in the present time], A Commemorative Publication to Celebrate the National Day of 1940, *Bangkok:* The Public Relations Department, no pagination

Figure 42 Newspaper columns ‘Sang thai hai pen maha amnat duay sukkhaphap phaen mai’ [Creating the powerful Thailand through a new health regime] and ‘Len klam baep saifalaep’ [20 ways for speedy bodybuilding] *Si Krung*, 3rd November 1941: 9

Source: The National Archives, Thailand

Figure 43 Mural Painting from Suwannaram Temple, Bangkok depicting Prince Vessantara and his family from the Vessantara Jakata

Source:http://kanchanapisek.or.th

Figure 44 Mural Painting from Suwannaram Temple, Bangkok depicting the life of the ordinary people
Source:http://kanchanapisek.or.th

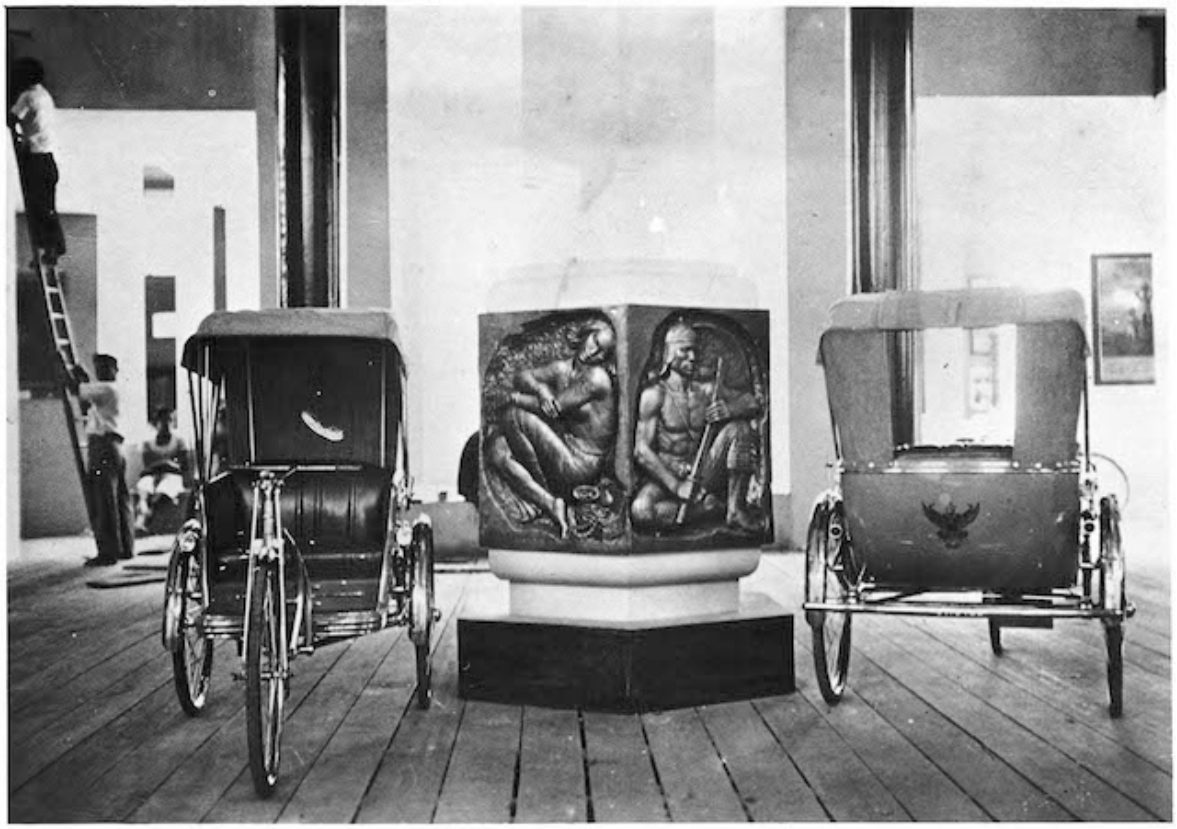


Figure 45 Silpa Bhirasri, *The Six Principles* [*Lak hok prakan*], 1937, Silpakorn Pavilion, The Annual Constitution Fair, Saranrom Palace, Bangkok

Source: The National Archives, Thailand

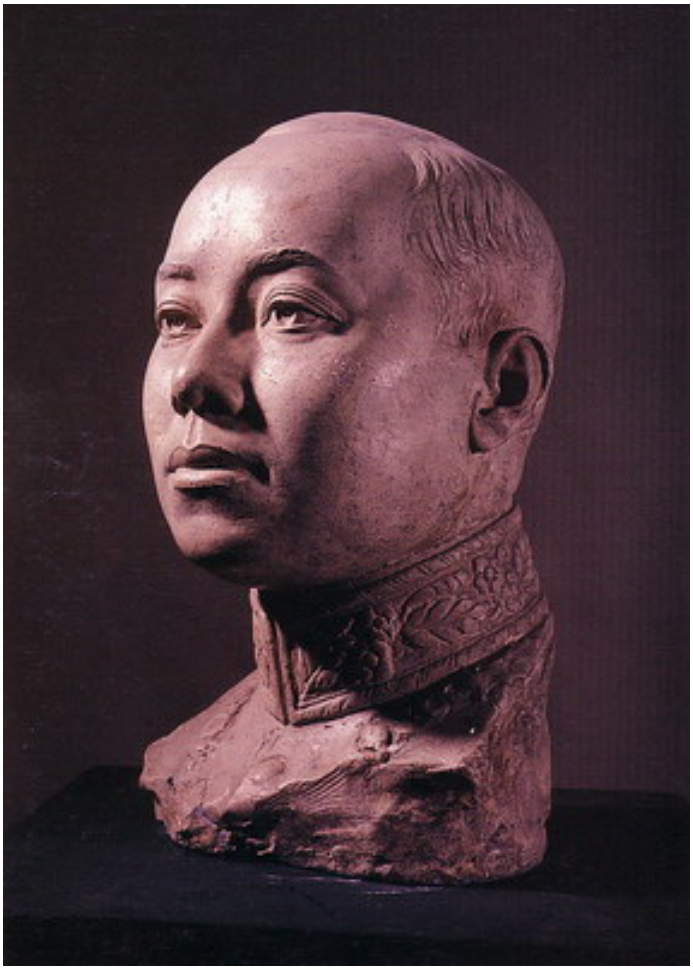


Figure 46 Silpa Bhirasri, *King Vajiravhud*, 1925
Source: www.era.su.ac.th

Figure 47 Silpa Bhirasri, *To Their Heroes Who Died for the Country*, 1922, bronze, Portoferraio, Italy (Photograph: Carlo Carletti)
Source: Poshyananda, Apinan (1992) *Modern Art in Thailand. Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, p. 39

Figure 48 Sanit Dithapan, Sitthidet (Bunjua) Saenghiran, Piman (Thongyen) Munpramuk, Silpa Bhirasri, Sanan Silakon and Sawaeng Songmangmi in front of the Fine Art Department, date unknown

Source: Silpakorn University (1993) *"Rakngao" mahawitthayalai sinlapakon. Nithatsakan phon ngan khong "sit" rongrian pranit sinlapakam-rongrian sinlapakorn phanaek chang* ["Roots" of Silpakorn University. Exhibition of "students" from Silpakorn Art Academy] (Catalogue), Bangkok: Amarin Printing and Publishing, p. 32

Figure 49 Silpakorn Pavilion, 1937, The Annual Constitution Fair
Saranrom Palace, Bangkok
Source: The National Archives, Thailand

Figure 50 Silpakorn Pavilion, 1938, The Annual Constitution Fair
Saranrom Palace, Bangkok
Source: The National Archives, Thailand

Figure 51 Phraya Phahon Phonphayuhasena at Silpakorn Pavilion, 1937, The Annual Constitution Fair, Saranrom Palace, Bangkok

Source: The National Archives, Thailand

Figure 52 Inside Silpakorn Pavilion, 1938, The Annual Constitution Fair
Saranrom Palace, Bangkok
Source: The National Archives, Thailand

Figure 53 Jongkon Kamjatrok, *Cultivation* [*Khwaum Jaroen*], 1937
Silpakorn Pavilion, The Annual Constitution Fair, Saranrom Palace, Bangkok
Source: The National Archives, Thailand

Figure 54 Sitthidet (Bunjua) Saenghiran, *Economics* [*Lak setthakit*], 1937
Silpakorn Pavilion, The Annual Constitution Fair, Saranrom Palace, Bangkok
Source: The National Archives, Thailand

Figure 55 Jongkon Kamjatrok, *Agriculture* [*Kasikam*], 1937
Silpakorn Pavilion, The Annual Constitution Fair, Saranrom Palace, Bangkok
Source: The National Archives, Thailand

Figure 56 Chaem Khaomichue, *Maephosop* [Goddess of Rice], 1938
Silpakorn Pavilion, The Annual Constitution Fair, Saranrom Palace, Bangkok
Source: The National Archives, Thailand

Figure 57 Sanan Silakon's sculpture of a running soldier carrying a rifle (middle), 1937
Silpakorn Pavilion, The Annual Constitution Fair, Saranrom Palace, Bangkok
Source: The National Archives, Thailand

Figure 58 Piman Munpramuk, *Warrior*, 1937, Silpakorn Pavilion, The Annual Constitution Fair, Saranrom Palace, Bangkok

Source: The National Archives, Thailand

Figure 59 Chaem Khaomichue, *The Archer*, 1938, Silpakorn Pavilion, The Annual Constitution Fair, Saranrom Palace, Bangkok

Source: The National Archives, Thailand

Figure 60 Emile Antoine Bourdelle, *Hercules Hercules Killing the Birds of Lake Stymphalis*, 1909, Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France

Source: www.musee-orsay.fr

Figure 61 The Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok
at the National Assembly, Bangkok
Source: Author

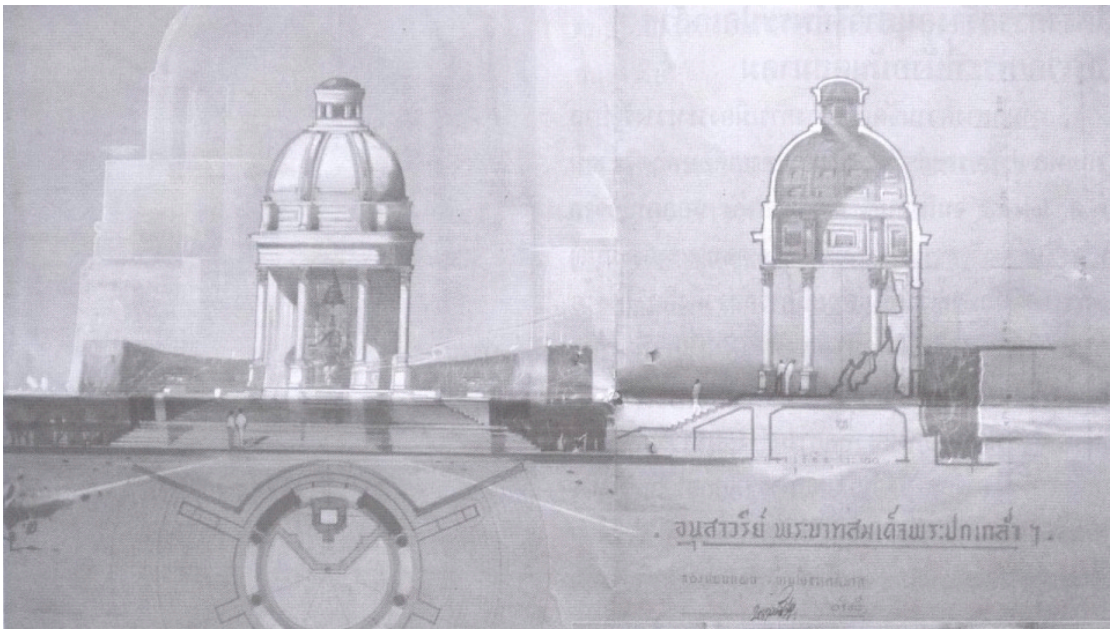


Figure 62 Design of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok at the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall, 1951

Source: The Secretariat of the Cabinet Archives

Figure 63 The Democracy Monument
Ratchadamnoen Avenue, Bangkok
Source: The National Archives of Thailand

Figure 64 Design of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok at the Democracy Monument No. 1, 1952

Source: The Secretariat of the Cabinet Archives

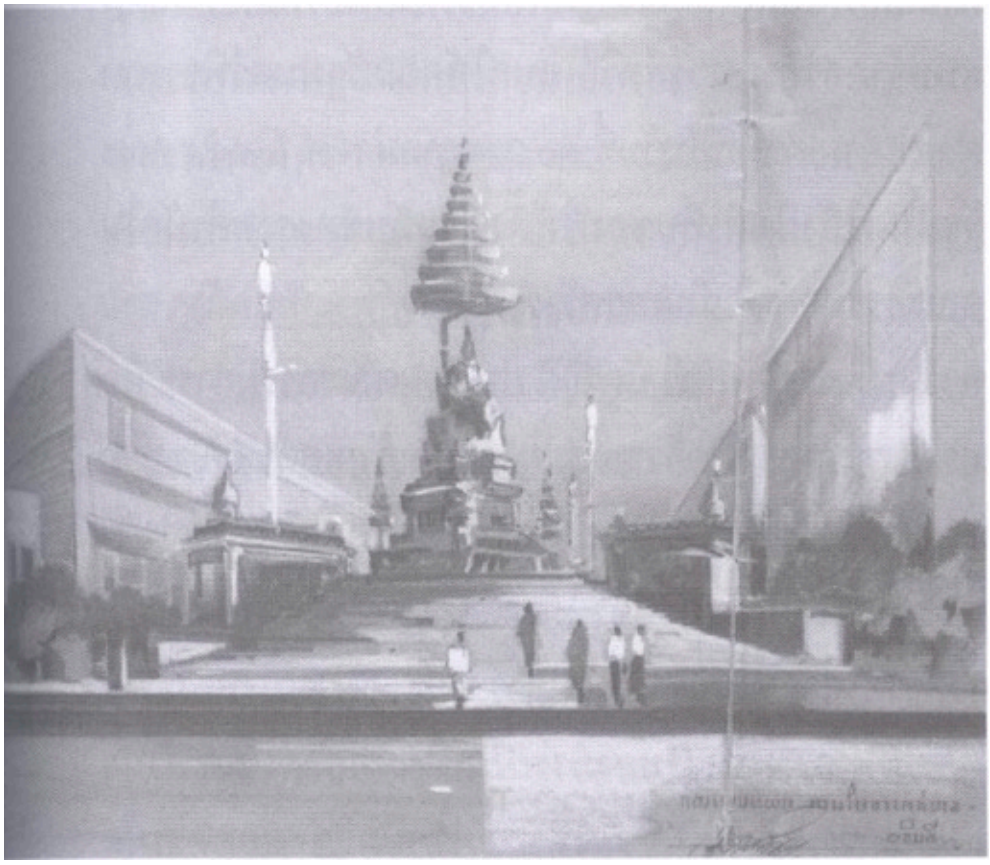


Figure 65 Design of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok at the Democracy Monument No. 2, 1952

Source: The Secretariat of the Cabinet Archives

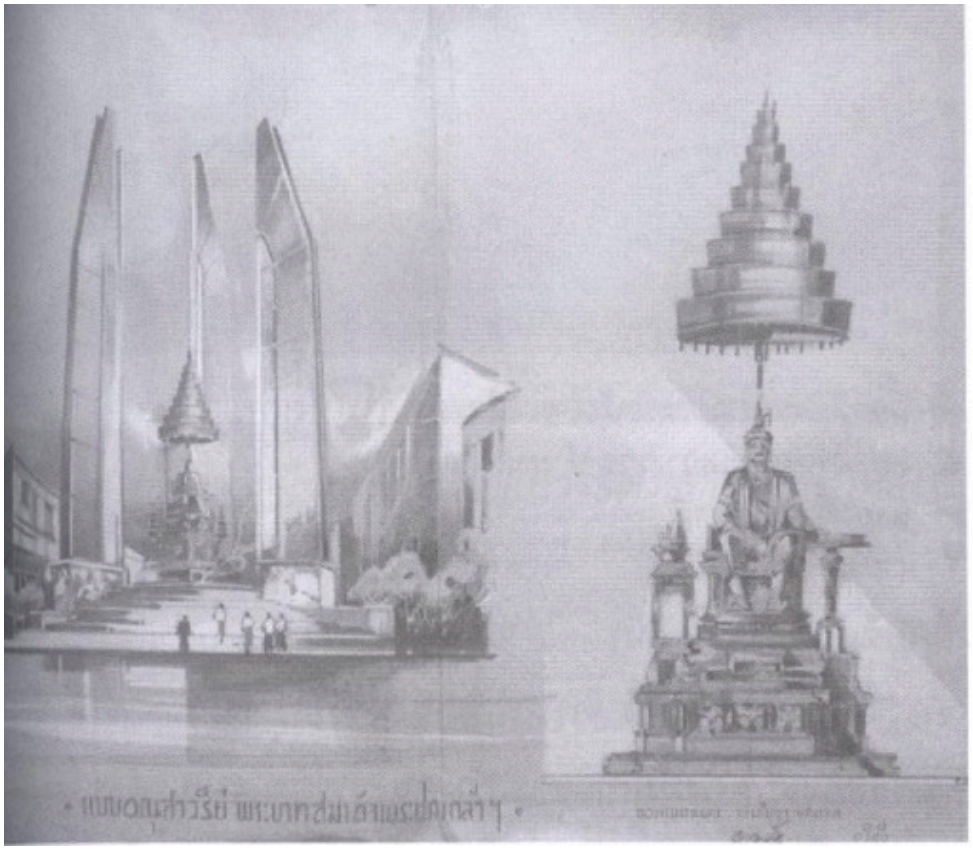


Figure 66 Design of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok at the Democracy Monument No. 3, 1952

Source: The Secretariat of the Cabinet Archives

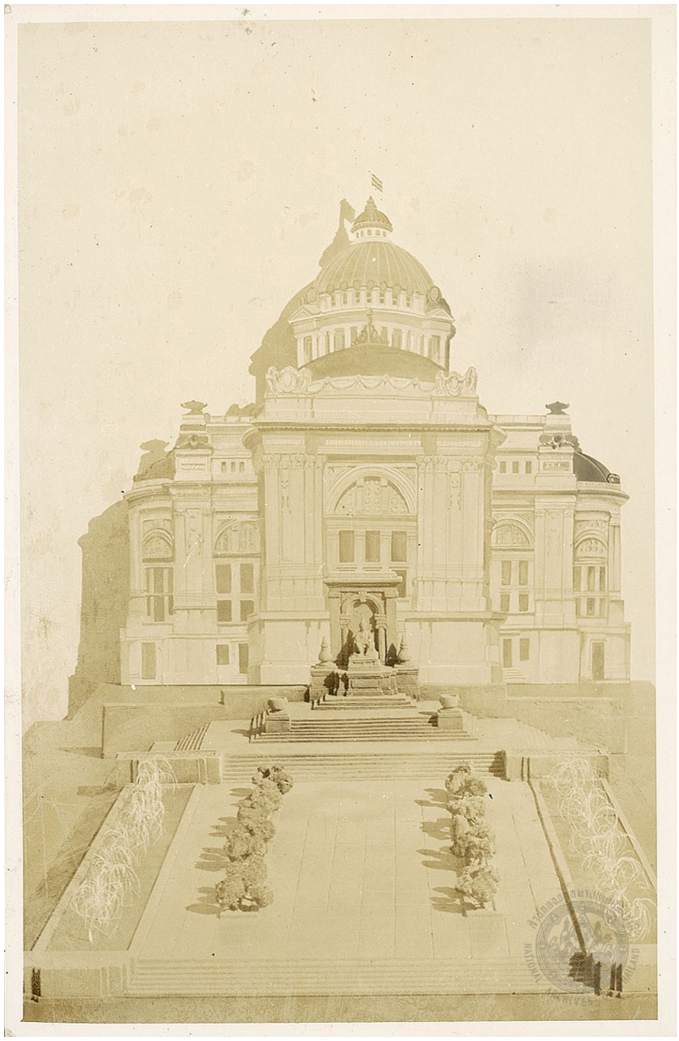


Figure 67 Model of the Royal Statue of King Prajadhipok in front of the Ananta Samakhom Throne Hall, c. 1974

Source: The National Archives of Thailand

Figure 68 The commemoration of the 1932 Revolution at the People's Plaque, 24th June 2007

Source: www.prachatai.com

Figure 69 The commemoration of the 1932 Revolution at the People's Plaque, 24th June 2009

Source: www.prachatai.com

Figure 70 The motto “Democracy, Liberty, Equality” on a piece of white paper cut into the form of the Democracy Monument in the commemoration of the 1932 Revolution at the People’s Plaque, 24th June 2009

Source: www.prachatai.com

Figure 71 D-Magazine (front right) and other Red Shirts publications

Source: www.prachatai.com

Figure 72 The Red Shirts at the Safeguarding the Constitution *Monument,* 12th March 2010
Source: www.prachatai.com

Figure 73 White box with the words “Cremating the Evil Aristocrats” used in the Red Shirts’ cursing ritual at the Safeguarding the Constitution *Monument,* 12th March 2010
Source: www.prachatai.com

Figure 74 The Red Shirts' funeral ceremony at the Democracy Monument, 11th April 2010

Source: www.prachatai.com

Figure 75 The circumambulation of the red coffin at the Democracy Monument, 11th April 2010

Source: www.prachatai.com

Figure 76 Families and friends holding photographs of the victim in the Red Shirts' funeral ceremony at the Democracy Monument, 11th April 2010

Source: www.prachatai.com

Figure 77 Cleaning the Democracy Monument, 15th April 2010

Source: www.manager.co.th

Figure 78 The Big Cleaning Day, 23rd May 2010

Source: www.prachatai.com

Fig. 79 The Dead Body Performance at the Democracy Monument

1st August 2010

Source: www.prachatai.com

Figure 80 The People's Party the Second at the commemoration of the 1932 Revolution on the 24th June 2012

Source: www.prachatai.com

Figure 81 The protected Royal Plaza and the People's Party's Plaque on the commemoration of the 1932 Revolution on 24th June 2014

Source: www.prachatai.com

Figure 82 The participants prepared to release the balloons at the Democracy Monument on the 24th June 2014

Source: www.prachatai.com